Locality, History, Memory

Locality, History, Memory:
The Making of the Citizen in South Asia

Edited by

Rila Mukherjee and M. N. Rajesh

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ABOUT THE SERIES
PASTS AND FUTURES:
READINGS IN A CONTEMPORARY WORLD

The end of the twentieth century has seen momentous shifts both in production and in production relations, now visible in new clusters that dominate physical and intellectual landscapes. This has substantially changed the way we perceive ourselves, as well as the world around us.

And yet, this transformation is only partial, visible in some landscapes. Old theories are inadequate to address the rapidly unfolding changes. The question rises: how do we relate past experience-and conventional disciplines-with contemporary realities? How do those 'left behind' perceive themselves and the world around them? How do the humanities and the social sciences cope? What is the position, and function, of archaeology, a science that deals exclusively with the human past, in this new shift? What role do disciplines, citizens, communities, states and nations play in this new society? How do we negotiate this new world? Are we living only in a networked society?

Language, anthropology, history and historical sociology become, in this context, absolutely relevant once again. How can past experience help us engage with this new world? What are the processes through which the past is forged? What are the optics through which the past is perceived, the tropes through which the present is negotiated, the lens which represents the past and foretells the furure? The negotiation between the past and the present is never more robust than now, in this neo liberal age, when historical memory plays a critical role in defining identity: linguistic, religious, and racial. Paradoxically, nationalism, far from being under stress, is facing a resurgence. The communities we forge are still imagined, but they now embrace cyberspace as well.

The power of ICT is enabling a new kind of *communitas*. Just as the invention of printing and the coming of the book created a group of readers in sixteenth century Europe, just as the newspaper in nineteenth century Asia created a political group anxious for democracy , so too the

blog in the twenty first century offers multiple platforms for global citizens to voice their alarm and despondency over world affairs. Older clusters of activity transform into nodes in networks that are transnational.

Citizenship is redefining itself. As new productive relations materialize, as new methods of organising skills and workspaces occupy centre stage, as technology increasingly dominates our lives, as old hierarchies disappear and new ones are reconfigured spatially, citizens forge new links through networks, rather than in clusters, within and across nation states.

The phenomenal growth of the knowledge economy has, therefore, changed the way we live our lives. Two examples come readily to mind: the awesome reach of the internet media which forges new communities and the transformation in work culture that is steadily eroding the conventional distinction between blue and white collar jobs. Cultures are no longer in transition; they are being reconstituted.

Silently, traditional disciplines are forging new bridges with technology: the transformation of GIS applications into a new discipline-digital geography-is a case in point. There is a novelty here that we often ignore: in this fast changing technology dominated world: the new relations that dominate our lives are both omnipresent and at the same time invisible.

How these changes reconfigure our negotiation with the past is the focus of **Pasts and Futures: Readings in a Contemporary World,** an initiative launched by concerned faculty and research scholars in the Schools of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India.

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We dedicate this volume to the memories of Prof. Dawa Norbu (d. 2006) and to Dr. Prabhati Mukherjee (1920-2008).

Rila Mukherjee
M. N. Rajesh
Hyderabad, December 2008.

INTRODUCTION

DENIZEN AND CITIZENS: CITIZENSHIP IN THE WORLD TODAY

RILA MUKHERJEE

I

Locality, History, Memory was born out of a requirement to interrogate the tropes through which history and memory underpin the notions of citizenship in present Southasia. The negotiation between the past and the present is never more robust than now, in this neo liberal age, when history and memory play a critical role in defining identity in Southasia: linguistic, religious, cultural, national and racial. Moving away from the role of the state, which has been at the centre of all inquiries on citizenship, we ask here the following questions: How does our history enforce or dilute the notion of the citizen? How far does memory strengthen or weaken it? What role do features not normally associated with citizenship such as ritual, faith, religion and pilgrimage play in reinforcing such a status?

Time (both time present and time past) is framed here in two settings: as privileging both place (material or ideological site) and space (areas such as religion, oppression, marginalization [dalitisation, for example]). Time therefore transcends here both site/location and actual physical boundaries. Locality or location is therefore envisioned in terms of both actual place as well as a gateway to a larger space, in terms of a situation where historical memory negotiates the increasingly complex present. Agency and contingency therefore assume a critical importance here.

In the intensely performative age of late globalisation, the role and play of historical memory in creating identities need to be studied, we felt. The enactment of memory seems aggressively antique in modern garb in the

eyes of the social scientist, while in the eyes of the performer it often possesses a subjective modernity. Antiquity is out, retro is in. Perception, the representation of the past in terms of its defining moments and consequent actions, has become very important.

Paradoxically, nationalism, far from being under stress, is facing resurgence in invention[1] and much of the arguments in the essays still organize themselves around the concept of the nation state. However, there is a conflict between the *idea* of the nation state and the perception of the larger civilizational area of which the nation state forms a part; and this conflict is brought out succinctly in the concluding chapter by M.N. Rajesh.

Community, nations and nationalisms have always had an uneasy relationship with history. While inventing itself, nationalism points to an immemorial past and a limitless, sometimes timeless, future, which material reality often curtails. The complex relation between citizen, nation, its 'other' and terror, is one such example, writing especially in the wake of the Mumbai terror attacks of 26/11. The terrorist is, after all, also a nationalist, but from the 'other' side. Unfortunately it was not possible to include an essay on this aspect in this volume.

Having said this; it seems that citizenship in Southasia is reinventing itself through allegiance both to the old and the new. Citizen mobilization is taking place through new means and bodies such as the internet, political parties and rights watch groups, Trade Unions, and industrial actions. But allegiance to older forms of collective identity and action is assuming new forms as well: local level community actions, religious identity, pilgrimage, naturopathy are a few cases studied here. The varied essays in this volume point to the optics through which the past is perceived, the lens through which the past is represented, the tropes through which the present is negotiated, and the vehicles through which the future is foretold.

Language becomes here, through its system of symbols and signs, as much an organizing object, as any other social feature. Just as Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Urdu, classical Sanskrit or Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit became the distinguishing features of religious communities, bureaucracies , trading groups and political communities, so too today's language breeds a new kind of transnational community that restricts itself to txt language[2].

Yes, the communities we forge are still imagined, but they now embrace cyberspace as well[3]. And the national space is now challenged as never before.

II

Desforges et al write that traditionally citizenship has been addressed through the concept of space. The notion of 'spaces of citizenship' has provided a useful framework for geographical engagement with the theory and practice of citizenship, particularly through exploration of the spatially differentiated nature of de facto citizenship as experienced by 'othered' groups who are subjected to social and spatial marginalization[4].

Citizenship was initially linked to place rootedness. Historically, citizenship was a gift and a mark of *belonging* and *commitment* to a specific place (a city-state or borough), and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship were performed in this civic context. See Aristotle's *Politics* or look to republican Rome. Study fifteenth century Renaissance Europe for reaffirmations of the idea of the active citizen.

The place-rootedness of citizenship was diluted by the assertion of the nation-state and of national citizenship from the late eighteenth century onwards. As space has also a larger territorial component, the prevalent notion of citizenship then evolved around the 'national' citizen[5]. But space has also a reach beyond territorial groupings and the nation state is no longer the only available space for the active citizen[6].

Whereas the mode of 'managed liberalism' that was dominant in most post-war advanced liberal democracies prioritized the 'national citizen' in its emphasis on the security of social, political and economic rights at the national scale (see chapter twelve by Uba which demonstrates a very specific Indian situation where protests are often mobilized through political parties and trade unions; although even at this level, the place, its culture and context remain important), the new mode of 'governing through communities' shifts the emphasis to the practice of responsibilities by 'active citizens' in sub-national communities. Operationalised across the canvass of state activity, such 'active citizenship' includes the organization of 'neighbourhood watch' schemes to guard against crime, community initiatives to provide or support education, social housing and welfare provision outside the state sector, and the promotion of community-led actions for economic regeneration and for the sharing of

common resources, such as electricity, water or grazing lands. Although the strategy of 'governing through communities' need not necessarily refer to place-based communities, the territorial mentality of the state has meant that in practice it is often through place-based communities that active citizenship is mobilized, focusing renewed importance on the engagement of *citizenship* and *place*[7].

So the recent transition in governmentality has arguably *remade* the connection: active citizens act for and within place-based communities and they are defined by place-based community. This in turn has spatially fragmented the practice of citizenship in at least three ways. First, the principle of universal entitlement in national citizenship has been replaced by territorially limited initiatives of active citizenship, such as neighbourhood watch schemes may feel responsible only for those areas with significant participation rates. Second, the capacity of a community to act according to normative models of active citizenship and community action is shaped by the characteristics of the place, including its institutional infrastructure, historical and geographical context, social and economic composition and so on, such that uneven geographies of local citizen action result. In chapter thirteen Gopinath shows us the effectiveness of water management based on indigenous knowledge at the local community level; Dhaske in chapter fourteen and Kibria and Rahman in chapter fifteen note that initiatives based on local knowledge systems have yet to be integrated into policy. Third, active citizens are judged to have succeeded or failed as citizens of a place-based community, with repercussions for the further treatment of that locality by the state[8].

The situation is of course exacerbated in those spaces that experienced colonialism. Hindess writes[9]:

> The condition of citizenship in post-colonial states in particular is also seriously constrained by the governmental institutions and practices inherited from the colonial period, most of which were predicated on a view of the subject population as considerably less civilised than their rulers. In practice, of course, some such view of the subject population is held by the political/administrative class in all modern states but it was more pronounced, and more freely expressed, in the case of populations subject to modern imperial rule. Colonial rule by Western states involved a clear distinction between citizens and subjects and a systematic development of what eventually became known, in the case of Britain's African possessions, as indirect rule: that is, of a practice of government which worked through institutions that relied on what were thought to be indigenous customs and structures of authority.

Locality, *History*, *Memory* shows that citizenship in contemporary Southasia is constrained not only by the vestiges of the colonial past but also by the residue from older practices, as the articles in the section on marginality note.

III

At the same time, citizenship is also being rescaled upwards above the nation-state; see the European Union which has proactively sought to foster a sense of European citizenship; see SAARC efforts to bring about a composite Southasian citizenship. The newly proposed South Asian University, whose courses would offer a composite Southasian culture, a common knowledge base and a holistic training with Southasia as focus is a case in point. Yet, it is not only state actors that are involved in rescaling citizenship. In an increasingly cosmopolitan and globalised world, new transnational citizenships are emerging based on ethnic, cultural or religious identities and promoted by diasporic communities or faith groups. This is also one of the arguments of this volume. The development of such awareness has been assisted by the instantaneous interconnectivity of global telecommunications as well as by the increased mobility of individuals in travelling the world for work and leisure, both of which have been attributed as factors in the response to the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004, the Pakistan earthquake of 2005, and of course in the immediate aftermath of the Mumbai terror attacks of 26/11(the globalised nature of the accusations and counter accusations between India and Pakistan, the coordination between the different security and investigative agencies in India, Pakistan and indeed around the world, the universal condemnation of terrorism by all communities, and the coming together and affirmations of faith in the nation by all communities).

A notion of 'global citizenship' has been nurtured within civil society, particularly by aid agencies and environmental and human rights groups seeking both to extend 'global rights' and to engender a sense of collective global responsibility: this global citizenship is particularly visible in the arenas of global human and cultural rights, water management, environment watch and so on[10]. It is time that we start to think of sustainable citizenship (at least in a fully fledged sense) as an open, or hybrid form of citizenship, which connects different spaces, times and facets of substance[11].

What makes a sustainable citizen? S/he has to know a wide variety of contexts-perhaps the Indian caste system, Islamic religious beliefs, or French colonial ties to North Africa-but a study of these tend to produce a very abstract and arbitrary set of values. It suggests that to be a good sustainable citizen, you need to have certain types of political and historical knowledge. Of course this reification of certain forms of knowledge undermines the practical nature of sustainable citizenship, or an appreciation of the ways in which individuals' own actions affect the environment, distant others and future generations[12].

IV

The first section of *Locality, History, Memory*, the essays by Jha, Rai et al, Rafique, and Gregory, points to different ways religion, memory and tradition traverse regions, peoples languages and cognitive practices in India and Nepal. The essays by Rai et al and Gregory point to the insidious Brahmanisation that is becoming visible in various folk practices in India and Nepal. Both in the *mundum*, the ritual chant of the Kiratis in Nepal, and in the 'natural' religion of the tribes in Kerala, India, Sanskrit loan words and the appearance of Brahmin deities are diluting the original content of their beliefs.

Jha's essay is particularly significant in that it points out a basic fallacy made by social scientists: that folk (*volk*) and *loka* (people) are the same. Folk has a connotation of the national, either as ideal or actual, but *loka* means a vast mass left untouched by Vedic ritual. *Loka* as denizen may also be considered to be the marginal, and Jha's essay is a fitting start to a volume that ends with marginals and marginality, in Part Five. Chapter ten (Balachandran), chapter sixteen (Patil) and chapter seventeen (Begari) reinforce the marginal status of the *loka*.

What implication does this have for the transformation of *loka*, or denizen, into citizen?

The second section should spark off a debate. Malik writes that ethnography and translation studies can provide an alternative history through its integration of the social sciences, humanities and material culture. This is contested by the two essays that follow: the essays by Temjenwabang and Malsawmdawngliana show the tragedy of a people trapped by a memory that has little hope of translating into 'history'. These two essays, from the perspectives of Naga and Mizo histories respectively, are particularly

significant because history writing was fractured in these regions by the colonial intrusion. Ethnography, instead of providing a way out, actually helped reinforce the prejudices and attitudes that colour histories of the north east of India written by post colonial scholars even today.

An additional need was to question the when and how the play of location, memory and history translated into notions of citizenship across Southasia. Southasia is an exceptionally plural area of races, faiths, languages, beliefs and knowledge traditions. The essays by Basu, Rao, Balachandran and Mukherjee in the third section show that the pull of factors other than politics is possibly stronger here. Is regionalism too stronger here than in other parts of Asia?

This situation is now being challenged by new kinds of protests and the new technologies as never before, seen in the essay by Uba which starts the fourth section. The essay on the politics of electricity between regions by Rao, although historical in scope and therefore placed in the third section, may be read as a forerunner to that of Gopinath in the fourth section which shows the impact of water management in the region. Dhaske and Kibria/Rahman illustrate the impact of global movements on the economic and health domains in two critical studies on India and Bangladesh.

The fifth section on marginality shows different strands of marginalization. If the essay by Patil points to the helplessness of tribals, that by Begari shows how this helplessness is now translating into an assertion that the Indian state is uncomfortable with. Eswarappa's essay on peoples' participation in development and capacity building programmes is different in that it suggests a way out through developmental activities. Waqar's essay addresses another kind of marginalization, that of learning disabilities, and suggests how these may be remedied in the classroom.

I started this introduction with the notion of time--particularly the past and the present. But time past and time present are not the only concerns of *Locality, History, Memory*. The future is upon us now and M.N. Rajesh shows us how the discipline of history is unequipped to face the new world. Yet, history remains important because without knowledge of the past we risk the slippage into a technocratic vision and mode with little respect for local conditions and cultural contexts.

If Truth and Time are at the basis of all historical writing, as historians claim, then both have faced challenges historians have not been successful

in overcoming. History's Truth claims were undermined by the post modernist assault, most visibly in cultural studies, from the 1980s, and Time, the basis of history as Fernand Braudel once said, has now assumed a form that historians are unable to cope with. Compacted time blurs the sequential divide between the past and now. Yesterday has now become the past, in this fast changing world that we live in. And due to the digital divide, one group's past has become another group's present. How do we deal with this fast and yet uneven change? The new ICTs are transforming communities like never before and how!

Manuel Castells wrote that 'new power lies in the codes of information and in the images of representation around which societies organize their institutions, and people build their lives, and decide their behavior. The sites of this power are people's minds'[13]. Just as this 'new power' is transforming the notion of time, it is also both transforming conventional understandings of citizenship and also pressing the case for more complex cultural understandings of its genuinely new dimensions. Definitions of citizenship need to link the struggle for rights and social justice with the quest for recognition and cultural respect. Further, while citizenship studies have broadened their focus to include concepts such as sexual citizenship, ecological citizenship and multicultural citizenship, it needs to pay greater attention to the rise of the 'cultural' society. The genuinely 'cultural' dimensions of citizenship can no longer be assumed to be peripheral within modern mediated, globalised and post-modernized societies. These features and others have transformed modern forms of citizenship[14].

Cosmopolitanism means a way of viewing the world-a way that among other things dispenses with national exclusivity, dichotomous forms of gendered and racial thinking, doing away with seeing things exclusively within national frames, and imposing rigid separations between culture and nature, and popular and high culture. Such a sensibility would be open to the new spaces of political and ethical engagement that seek to appreciate the ways in which humanity is mixed into inter-cultural ways of life.

V

Territoriality fosters identity. So does culture. Localism, parochialism and a related sense of exclusiveness (memory, history) are still there in a people's understanding of political life, in making their identity and of

determining their place as citizens within these markers. Also, bounded spaces, such as nation-states, distort the relational spaces of topological connections in important ways, so that regional and transnational narratives of belonging and citizenship are yet to emerge. We have yet to go beyond national frames when we study any phenomenon, be it historically or contemporaneously. Yet, while escaping the 'tyranny of the local', citizens, activists and the ordinary person in the street next door often engage in new transnational networks of empowerment. There is a potential for a certain degree of liberation within these new spaces of citizenship but we should be wary of ascribing a necessary link between relational thinking and political empowerment and liberation. Less powerful groups (those economically and politically disadvantaged, the physically disabled, the digitally challenged and culturally deprived groups) may well be disempowered as a result of engaging more fully with the topological connections of a global world.

For mobile populations, *hybrid citizenship* may form the basis of complex new forms of subjectivity. The hybrid identities to which multiple memberships in different states and political communities give rise pose major challenges to states' core capacities to define their citizenry, but they are also a testimony to the inventiveness of subjects in engaging in an assemblage of transnational practices to access material and citizenship resources, and increase their life opportunities and those of their families[15].

Citizenship is far from being a discrete entity. It is actually multidimensional, referring to the formal, legal status of nationality as embodied in the ration card, the SC/ST certificate or the passport in Southasia; the peoples' access to certain ideologies, rights and privileges; empowerment, a form of political practice; political/communal identity or solidarity, faith, a sense of belonging. This list is not exhaustive. How the various facets of citizenship are being transformed by the complex and diversely spatialized practices in the world today, including the new forms of governance that respond to deprivations and insecurities in populations, was a concern in *Locality*, *History*, *Memory*.

Notes

[1] Benedict Anderson, 2006, *Imagined Communities*, Revised edition, Verso, London, New York: 6

[2] And literature! See Gautam Malkani, 2006, *Londonstani*, HarperCollins, UK.
3 Manuel Castells, 1996, *The Information Age:Economy, Society and Culture*, V.1 *The Rise of the Network Society,* (second edition, 2000), Blackwell, Cambridge, MA; Oxford, UK:, and Castells, 1997, V.2 *The Power of Identity, The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture,* (second edition, 2004), Blackwell, .Cambridge, MA; Oxford, UK.
[4] Luke Desforges, Rhys Jones and Mike Woods, 2005, 'New Geographies of Citizenship', *Citizenship Studies*, 9:5, 439 – 451: 439.
[5] Satoshi Ikeda, 2004, 'Imperial subjects, national citizenship, and corporate subjects: cycles of political participation/exclusion in the modern world-system', *Citizenship Studies*, 8:4, 333 – 347.
[6] Barry Hindess, 2002, 'Neo-liberal Citizenship', *Citizenship Studies*, 6:2, 127 – 143.
[7] Desforges et al: 440.
[8] Desforges et al: 440-41.
[9] Barry Hindess, 2002: 137-8.
[10]Anna Bullen and Mark Whitehead, 2005, 'Negotiating the Networks of Space, Time and Substance: A Geographical Perspective on the Sustainable Citizen', *Citizenship Studies*, 9:5, 499 – 516: 503.
[11] Ibid: 507.
[12] Ibid: 511-12.
[13] Castells, 1997, Vol 1, p. 359.
[14] Nick Stevenson, 2003, 'Cultural Citizenship in the 'Cultural' Society: A Cosmopolitan Approach', *Citizenship Studies*, 7:3, 331 – 348: 331. See too Pierre Bourdieu, 1984, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, Routledge, London.
[15] Daiva Stasiulis, 2004, 'Hybrid citizenship and what's left', *Citizenship Studies*, 8:3, 295 – 303: 301.

PART I:

MEMORIES

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONCEPTS OF 'FOLK' AND 'LOKA': A REVIEW

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In most of the languages of northern and western India, the word *loka* is considered as equivalent of the word 'folk'. One of the most popular English – Hindi dictionaries mentions *loka* as the meaning of 'folk' (Bulcke, 2002). In the *Comprehensive Glossary of Technical Terms* (1973: 543) one finds the same meaning of folk. Besides, the sociological and anthropological researches on *lokageet*, *lokagatha*, *lokokti*, etc., are also generally recognized and entitled as studies of Indian 'folklore'. For example, one may mention the works of H. Barua (1963), Verrier Elwin (1944), Irawati Karve (1939), Sarat Chandra Mitra (1904, 1917, and 1929), B. Rama Raju (1964), M. S. A.Rao (1955), Sarat Chandra Roy (1932), K. D. Upadhyaya (1964), Ved Prakash Vatuk (1979), L. P. Vidyarthi (1959), Indra Deva (1989), etc. However, the cultural and historical background of the word *loka* and that of the word 'folk' are not same. It is, therefore, not out of place to discuss the meanings of each in view of its own historical and cultural contexts. Here, first, an attempt is made to describe the meanings assigned to 'folk'.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, J .G. Herder posited a philosophical framework of culture in Germany according to which Germany was considered to be its *volk*. The word *volk* was assigned chiefly three meanings: 1. people as a nation, 2. people of a historical part of a nation, or a tribe and 3. the people of the lower and governed class who are uneducated and regarded as common people (Dick, 1989:18-19). Considering the first and third meaning of *volk*, it seems that, for Herder, the concept of *volk* is dual-faceted; on the one hand, all the people of a nation constitute *volk*, on the other, *volk* is simply the mass of the lower class people. Richard Bauman (1992: 29) writes that for Herder 'the possession of a common language was the touchstone of a people's distinctiveness, the

source that gave rise to and sustained….. their…. unique social entity; language embodied the character, the inner being of volk'. In 1846, about 40 years after the death of Herder, Jacob Grimm reaffirmed the essential notion of *volk* held by Herder. According to him, 'A volk is the totality of people speaking the same language' (quoted in Tillis, 1999:34). Tillis (1999:34) contends in this context that Grimm, like Herder, advanced the dual-faceted concept of folk and wrote 'folk tales' as being both 'national tales' as well as 'tales of the common people' since 'the nation's (Germany's) heritage had been compelled by historical circumstances to take refuge among the lower classes'. It seems that in German tradition, it is the common people, the lower, governed and uneducated people who are considered *volk*[1] (folk). But their tales, being assumed to be containing the heritage of the entire nation, are supposed to be 'national tales'.

In England, it was William Thoms who first used the term 'folk-lore' in 1846 to replace the term 'popular antiquities'. Thoms himself was an antiquary concerned with rescuing the 'fading legend', 'fragmentary ballad' and 'neglected custom' of the olden times (Tillis 1999 : 29, 36). England had a long tradition of antiquarianism that considered the uneducated people of 'tightly bound rural communities' as the 'repository of … (all kinds of tales, legends). …and religious customs …. maintained by oral tradition' (Ibid ; 39). Later, there emerged cultural evolutionists led by E. B. Tylor, Andrew Lang and James Frazer, for whom folklore was one that had survived from the stage of savagery, the study of which would help in understanding and explaining the past (lost) cultural traditions as well as their 'survivals' in the present age of civilization (Ibid : 44). So, for them, it was the savage people who constituted 'folk' society. In early nineteenth century France, the peasants were called savage on account of being isolated, illiterate, etc, (Weber, 1976: 3-6). Robert Redfield and Milton Singer also hold almost a similar view. According to them (1976: 341):

> The folk society may be considered as that imagined combination of social elements which would characterize a long-established, homogeneous, isolated and non-literate (self-contained) community; the folk culture is that society seen as a system of common understandings. Such a society can be approximately realized in a tribal band or village.

So, for Redfield, folk society is a tribal society as assumed by the cultural evolutionists. Peasant society, however, according to Kroeber and Redfield, occupies an intermediate position between tribal stage and modern 'organic' society having elements of both (Jha, 1995: 6-7). Peasant society is thus held as still retaining the cultural traditions of the folk / tribal world. It may be

noted here that the works of Vasil Chakov, Chayanov, Eric Wolf, Daniel Thorner etc., make it clear that peasant social formation has its own features which are peculiar to it and which, thus, contradict Redfield's characterization of it as 'part society and part culture' (ibid: 7-9). However, it seems that the views of Kroeber and Redfield in respect of the continuity of folk traditions in peasant society are very close to that of cultural evolutionists in England. Tillis (1999: 44) concludes his analysis of the views of cultural evolutionists in the following words: 'Folklore, for the cultural evolutionists, was that which had survived from the savage stage of culture into the lower reaches of higher civilization ….. The term "folk" for the cultural evolutionists, referred simply to those who maintained folklore: the "modern European peasant" and "English ploughman" mentioned by Tylor, the "unprogressive classes" by Lang. The antiquaries' conception of the folk as the uneducated, primarily rural people who lived with, and under, an educated, urbanized elite was adopted without pause' (emphasis added).

This meaning of 'folk', thus, indicates that peasants for all practical purposes have been considered to constitute 'folk' and the study of its 'lore' can help one in understanding past cultural traditions. It appears to be close to the approach of Herder and Grimm in the sense that it also identifies folk with peasant, the bottom layer of people. However, there is a vital difference between the two: for Herder and Grimm, the study of folklore helps in understanding the national heritage as a whole, whereas, for the cultural evolutionists and antiquaries, folklore study can help in understanding the past by revealing its 'survivals'. Notwithstanding the views of Herder and Grimm and the English antiquaries (mentioned above), it seems that the American anthropological folklorists came to reach more or less a consensus regarding the meaning / identification of 'folk'. The *Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend*, edited by Maria Leach in 1949, included definitions of 'folklore' given by twenty one American folklorists which were subsequently analyzed by Francis Lee Utley (1965: 10) who, then, posited the consensus that conceived of folklore as simply oral tradition and considered 'folk' to be comprehensive enough to include all cultures, not one restricted only to peasant communities.

In addition to the above mentioned views on what is folk, Tillis (1999: 58-59) describes that the folk group is a small (face-to-face), not temporary, group according to Ben-Amos, and, further, according to Alan Dundes, the term 'folk' can refer to any group of people having at least one common factor, some tradition(s) 'which it calls its own'. He, then, gives his own definition (Ibid: 63-64): 'For a definition of folk ….. I suggest that a folk is