

## Oral Tradition as the Living Handbook of Narratology: The Cultural Impact of Dogra Folksongs on Gender

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In a society, a message from one person to another is communicated through the mechanism of a medium. Oral narratives, being one of the active medium, transmit cultural knowledge from one generation to another where in they reflect gender dogma in many ways. Among the several ways, oral narrations play a major part in creating and reflecting gendered culture in a society. This paper is based on an exploration of oral folk songs sung by Dogra women of the Duggar community of North India. These songs are in the Kandi and Pahari dialects of Dogri. The study is only circumscribed to those Dogri folk songs that expose women's wishes, feelings, emotions, unfulfilled desires, and reactions. Folk songs with the themes containing rituals, festivals, or ceremonies have been excluded.

Keywords: Gender dogma, folksongs, Heritage, Rituals, Femininity, Patriarchy

The Dogri folksongs give an insight of Dogri culture, beliefs, social setup and response to historical change. Reflecting a broader domain of experiences—from mundane to extra ordinary, material to mystical, depressing to joyful, from birth to death, they serve as a repository of rich heritage of Dogri culture. Ostensibly, these songs instead of focusing on the domestic rituals and ceremonies deal with the conventional stereotypes associated with the idea of emphasized femininity. The paper aims to present an empirical study of women's folk songs in Dogri culture as an expression of their desires, feelings, perception in a socially acceptable form, i.e., within the domains of patriarchal setup.

Being an oral tradition, the Dogri folk songs include a wide range of styles, influences and social practices. They have the ability to engage people with the richness of the culture in an emotional way. This nexus between the folksongs and the folks representing that particular language can be analyzed as:

“Folksongs not only help in understanding the socio – cultural and religious life of the community but also human psychology and the adaptability of an individual to his/her culturally constituted world.”<sup>1</sup>

A large diversity of folk songs like *pakhaan*<sup>2</sup>, *murkiyaan*<sup>3</sup>, and *lokgeet*<sup>4</sup> are available in Dogri culture. The contents of these songs are same but there are variations in dialects, tunes, and rhythms of the folk songs. They are mostly sung with musical instruments in a rhythmic manner in Jammu and Kashmir (a state in northern part of India). Their lyrics being almost simple and naive in their nature are based on candor and traditional Dogri folk tunes. Main occasions of singing these songs are boy childbirth, wedding, festival,

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welcoming and *vidaigeet*<sup>5</sup>, *satsang*<sup>6</sup>, joking relations, love theme, separation, costumes, farming, cultural awakening, historical events, fasting- feasting, festivals and so on. The females who sing these songs internalize them and pass them to further generations through their performances. "Dominant forms of subjectivity (or identity) are maintained, not through physical restraint or coercion, but through self-surveillance and self-correction to social norms."<sup>7</sup> In this way *lokgeet* (folk song)— contents spread across the community without any deliberate efforts. This normative control through gender inequality ensures the spread of the idea of emphasized femininity in a more potent way. Subscribers of these songs tend to be stereotypical images denied of their autonomous choices.

Much of work has been done on the North Indian folk songs by many writers, who have dealt with folk songs from various perspectives, but none of them has taken women as a talking point, which is hence the main hub in this paper. Mishra<sup>1</sup> has only tingled upon women's conditions in brief, leaving most of the important issues untouched. Wade<sup>2</sup> stressed only on the wedding songs. Chauhan<sup>3</sup> and Srivastava<sup>4</sup>, on the other hand, have dealt with the folk songs from a socio-cultural context. Whereas, Kuldeep<sup>5</sup> and Upadhyaya<sup>6</sup> have given only a customary view of folk songs and have not worked on them from the woman's perspective. Henry<sup>7</sup> talks about a few types of women's songs, but does not give any folk texts or discussions on women's stance as expressed in these songs. Another category is the *cait*<sup>8</sup> songs, which are generally composed by men, although the text usually expresses women's feelings and dilemmas. Tewari<sup>9</sup> has listed few folk songs of women, but he primarily focuses upon those which portray domestic rituals and customs. Avasthi<sup>10</sup> though gives a good array of women's folk songs, but his assistance remains constrained to anthology. Singh<sup>11</sup> has made an inclusive study of Avadhi folk songs, and Tripathi<sup>12</sup> has done the equivalent for Bhojpuri songs, but they have not dealt with them from the explicit viewpoint of women. Jassal<sup>13</sup>, an anthropologist, investigates women's lives in rural north India using the Dogri folksong as a logical frame. She considers of songs as unrestrained vehicles, cultural assets, as "existing cultural codes of approved behavior and norms,"<sup>(p8)</sup> and "cultural discourses on emotion," acknowledging that the "act of singing imparts psychological strength to individual women and to women's collectivities."

Singh & Gill<sup>14</sup> provided examples of various types of folksongs, unfolding their genres, analyzing their themes and presented a sample of lifecycle songs; but they did not take in hand the theme of women representation in particular. How a woman is portrayed in women's folk songs and what needs, desires, and aspirations she apprizes, what aggravation and discrimination she undergoes, is a matter that has attained till date very little attention in the literature. The paper at hand strives to fill this gap.

## Methodology

In order to study the semantics of the selected folk songs, two well-known textual analysis methods have been used: the content analysis procedures and the Hermeneutics approach. The application of content analysis method is done to identify and examine the messages contained in the folk songs about womanhood. Underlying hermeneutic interpretative orientation is the view that the meaning of a text is largely determined by the complex whole that constitutes the context of use.

Texts reveal their significance, not on the surface of images and representations, but rather, in the complex ways that they produce, transform and shape meaning-structure... Thus, the interpretation of a text requires an appreciation of the specific rules of its formal existence as a signifying practice.<sup>15</sup>

In analyzing and interpreting the folksongs, three major inherent processes of the hermeneutic approach are considered. These are:

- (i) Interpreting the individual concepts rooted within the folksongs,
- (ii) Accommodating the social and cultural contexts through which the various concepts are associated to a particular folksong, and
- (iii) Drawing conclusion about the overall meaning of the folksongs.

The Dogri Folk songs have played a key role in the social and cultural portrayal of the Dogri culture. In this segment, attempt lies to seek answers of the subsequent questions:

RQ1. Is the rural Dogri speaking community innately very violent towards Women?

RQ2. Is linguistic hostility common to them?

RQ3. Do these folk songs mirror real cultural and social practices?

Reviewing all folk songs, the main categories that have emerged and are dealt within this paper are folk songs based on the themes of gender discrimination, stances from before marriage and after marriage, and songs of separation: soldier's (*foji*)<sup>1</sup> wife struggle in the society. Women's folk songs, particularly those describing women's emotions, can, however, be divided into three categories depending on the occasions they are meant for, and that is how they shall be treated in the paper: Gender Discrimination, marriage and separation

*Gender Discrimination:* Dogri or 'Duggar' society is a male dominated society. Like any other modern society, it is basically patrilocal, patrilineal in its manner of organization. Women are expected to leave her birth-place after marriage to join her husband's clan. The property rights get transferred from senior male to the next in order. Man, therefore, always enjoys the upper hand in any clash of interests with women. Therefore, women are dependent on men for getting support and defense all over the life. As a daughter, she is dependent and protected by her father and brothers, as a wife by her husband and as a mother by her sons. Brothers are given more importance in homes and having a brother is considered as a social qualifier, i.e., one has both emotional and material support. It is evident in folk songs and a huge category is devoted to them.

Societal preference of male child, which is supported by statistical data almost everywhere shows that girls' number is far less than boys primarily due to female feticide. After birth on every step she faces gender discrimination. Folk songs are sung everywhere on occasion of boys' birth but on girls' birth nowhere in the society. The situation specific son-birth folk songs are known as *pakhaan* or *badaiyan*<sup>2</sup> and are sung on the birth of male baby and on ceremonies like *ritaan*<sup>3</sup> and *sutra*<sup>4</sup> of male child. The following refrain of a song sets the tone of the celebrations on the birth of a son in Dogra family:

*Khed khed ve nayanaya khed ve, apni maata di godi vich khed ve, tera babul bande lakh behl ve...*

(Translation: play dear baby boy; play in your mother's lap, your father distributes offerings, gifts especially to affinal relations...)

*Kaar nandji de baden badaayan ji, kaar nand ji de, bajjan badaayan te chadhan kadaaiyaan ji, kar nandji de...*

(Translation: Greetings enter *nandji*<sup>5</sup> house, Greetings enter Nandiji's house, Greetings enter and feasts are made in Nandiji's house...)

There are hardly any folk songs that celebrate the birth of a female child, except for progressive families. Since there are no exclusive songs for girls, the same songs that are sung at the birth of a boy are sung for by replacing the words for boy child with the words for girl child to make it suitable for the occasion.

## Marriage

One of the major categories in Dogri folksongs is the *suhaag*<sup>6</sup>, a type of nuptial songs where societal expectations resound through the anxious and willing persona of young women rousing her family to seek her suitable match.

On the other hand, almost all wedding songs call to bride *laado*<sup>1</sup> and where she projects her desires, emotions and feelings mainly for searching handsome husband; asking for proper arrangement of *baraat*<sup>2</sup>, decoration of her palanquin, *batnaa*<sup>3</sup> related to her special bath and facial and so forth. The folk songs supporting above comments is as follows:

*Buye te khadotiye tu mal mal per na toh, baagi chamba khidi reha, tu baithi haar paroh, maaye ni sun meriye, mere babul nu samjha, tiyaan hoyian latt baberiyaan, kise nokar de latt laa...*

(Translation: O mother now you ask my father that your daughter has now turned maiden, find some suitable match, particularly a government employee.)

*Baabol bede harya shehtoot ni maaye, do aaye jattan wale saadh maaye, ohte mangde kanya da daan maaye, mere babul nu chithiyaan paa maaye, aape devega kanya da daan maaye...*

(Translation: The girl is praising the lush green mulberry tree in my father's courtyard, and the same moment two saints enter and ask for alms, and then the girl asks her mother to send a letter to her father, asking him to come home and give them alms (do *kanyadan*<sup>4</sup>).

The persona of an aspirant bride is in conversations with his parents as to what type of husband she seeks. In these songs, the girl is seldom portrayed as docile, submissive or passive; on the contrary she is bold, daring and fearless. In real life, however girls have hardly any say in their own marriages.

The daughter getting married and leaving her father's home: Having nostalgic memories and emotions, this category is overwhelmed. *Kanyadan*, the giving of chaste daughters in marriage, is considered an act of charity worthy of the highest merit in the Indian context, and bestows honor and virtue. The following example showcases a bride's active reception of the responsibilities and worries that come with entering the new social space of her new home.

*Guddiyan pataari vich reh geiyaan, ho mera kirnu te reya wich tadke, saambh lo babul ji kaar apna ho tiyaan chaliyaan bagaane des ve, galiyaan babul ji hoyiaan pidiyan, ho tera veda te hoyia pardes ve...*

(Translation: The dolls are left behind in the basket now, along with the other toys, she is pleading her father to take care of his home now, because she is going to leave that house permanently to live at a strange place among strange people.)

In this category, we see a paradox between the way a daughter is so dearly loved and brought up that her going away can be heartrending, while, on the other hand, once she gets married she cannot visit her parents without an invitation.

The conditions in in-laws family and women's family support especially brother protect and support her in this tough time: Even in Hindu Law there is a provision to give women a fair deal in the sharing of ancestral property but there are hardly such women's cases which claim for it in Dogri. Chowdhary<sup>5</sup> confirmed the fact by reiterating that "*The Hindu Succession Act of 1956*"<sup>6</sup> granted to females inheritance rights equal to those of male members in the family for the first time in independent India. Otherwise brother protects

and supports his sister and visit with gifts during festival seasons and also usher her to her natal home *Maykaa*<sup>7</sup>. It is also believed that parents feel insecure and helpless for their daughter, if she is not happy with in-laws. However, brother's strong position does matter, and this again promotes son preference. Following local adages support this point, for example, "*Jiski beti sukhi uska janam sukhi* (if someone's daughter is happy, it means he has fulfilled the purpose of life); girl does not take extra diet, but you (parents) are helpless when she is unhappy/tortured at in-laws family, this is painful; girls need a care taker as a brother and so forth. A Dogri girl almost worships her brother. She feels fortunate to have him and shows an extravagant hospitality when he visits her on festive occasions. Traditionally, a sister is sent from her in-laws to her parent's home with her brother only. Frequent visits keep mutual touch between two families and subsequently in two villages and thus results inter-familial and inter-villages bonding.

Woman is complaining her mother about her mother-in-law: Since past so many years, Dogri girls are taught to be reverent and compliant to their husbands and their relatives (in-laws). In contrast to this, we can hear derogatory and denouncing words against these same relatives, who in real life are treated with great respect. Generally, a daughter-in-law does not dare to argue with her mother-in-law or sister-in-law, but in the folk songs these directions of normal conduct can be set aside with liberty. A plethora of anecdotes on women's pathetic and helpless life, the tyranny and torture she faces has been portrayed in such Dogri folksongs.

*Mere bede diye khajoore, mein saariyaan kaliyaan todh rakhaan, meri sasun ne bole mande bol, mein dabbi wich paayi rakhaan, mera babul ji aawan mere kol, mein saare dukh kholiye dasaan...*

(The girl is addressing the date palm tree in her courtyard; I will pluck all the flower buds and store them in a box, my mother-in-law has abused me, and I will also store those bad words in a box, when my parents will come to me, I will tell them all.)

Sometimes these songs smoothens the social confrontation and discontent and ease the women in efforts to adjust herself into her setting and fate. Many comforting and quieting songs sung at the time of farewell of a bride are remarkable in this context.

Woman is complaining her husband about her mother-in-law: Woman sends message to her husband to meet without delay. Immediately he reaches and is told about her complaints and gripes, about his mother who berates and rebukes her. Subsequently, her husband feels very sorry for her but he does not promise to do anything about this.

*Aaun galaaniyaan saach vo, mere baanku deya chachua, mikki vi leyi chal kach vo mere banku deya chachua, sas nanaan miki jeen nyi dindiyaan, thande paani da kut peen nyi dindiya, aakhdiyaan charkha katt wo, mere baanku deya chachua...*

(Translation: I am telling you the truth, take me along, my mother-in-law and my sister-in-law don't let me live happily, they don't let me drink even a sip of cold water, and ask me to spin the wheel all day...)

## Separation

Soldier's wife struggles in the society: Joining Army has been the most reputable occupation in Dogri culture. Since most of the time the soldier's wife does not accompany him due to some unavoidable circumstances, she has to struggle alone in the society. She is pining for him in his absence, seen carping that how could I celebrate my festivals when my husband

is fighting on border. She further signs that the weather is so pleasant and her husband is playing with bullets on the country's border; waiting for him is another aspect that describes her loneliness. The rainy season is one of the favorite seasons of women and is held to evoke many romantic and nostalgic feelings. The drizzle, the soft breeze and the lightening make her husband's absence more unbearable and cause her to feel sad and lonely. The loss of social inhibition in the absence of the husband is painted in the following folksong known as *surma*<sup>1</sup>:

*Palaa shipaaiya dogreya, rusliyaan-rusliyaan taaran tera badaa mandaa lagda, doo din chuttiyaan aayija suhaani rutt ambarein di...*

(Translation: My dear Dogra soldier, I really miss you, take leave and come home for two days, the weather is so pleasant...)

## Conclusion

The Dogri folk songs discussed above represent a multi-colored picture of the Dogri women. They not only symbolize an orthodox typecast of her, but also portrays her as buoyant and capable of expressing her emotions liberally and heedlessly. The songs articulate of her longings and wishes, her frustrations, and the dilemmas that go with different facades of her life. The songs lay naked the truth of her status in the society. Some songs describe her as passive and subservient, while others show her as valiant and rebellious. Some show that the girls are unsolicited and can only bring unhappiness to the family, while others celebrate their upbringing.

The conservative typecast of a Dogri woman describe her as immature, naive, and superstitious, as a person who looks upon the melancholy of life, disease, and death originating from the rage of gods and goddesses. She is regarded as pious and god fearing. This stereotype of the Dogri woman finds its pronouncement in the folk songs, but also its negation, as sometimes the Dogri woman appears as eccentric and radical mocking at the social precincts, as someone who is prepared to tackle the established authorities of social norms and customs, and is prone to speak about the injustices and inequities to which she is subjected. While she can be meek and submissive, she can even be strong and indomitable. Women's folk songs can be called a safety valve that works as an outlet for women through which they can put across their bottled-up bitterness against the social order.

Anything, however intolerable it may be in real life, finds a suitable outlet in the folk songs. It is through folk songs that women find expression for their passions, their frustrations, their anger, and their love. It is through them that they voice their grievances and show their hurt. The folk songs offer beautiful vignettes through which we can look into the intricate phenomenon we term culture. Folk songs, mainly women's folk songs, are a rich basis for understanding the place of women in Dogra society.

It is a decisive analysis of the folk songs that deal with women's common wishes, contained emotions, discontented desires, hopes, disappointments, and their reactions to their social environment. The portrait of woman as depicted in these songs is time and again at variance with the conventional typecast of an subservient, submissive, and traditionalist woman that is fabricated in one's mind. This paper highlights the very significant safety-valve function of these folk songs in which women are afforded an occasion to express their bottled-up feelings and their longings in a socially acceptable form.

The songs of women discussed above give a dappled picture of Dogra women. They do not portray only a conformist stereotype of a Dogra woman; they also portray her as jovial and capable of expressing her emotions liberally and with abandon. The songs tell us about her longings and desires, her frustrations, and the predicaments that go with different facets of her life. The songs lay uncovered her status in the Dogra society. Some describe her as obedient and submissive, others depict her as bold, audacious and rebellious. Some show us that girls are unwelcome and can only bring sorrow to the family, while others illustrate how affectionately and with what loving care they are brought up. In these folk songs, we also see the incongruity stuck between the ways a daughter is so dearly loved that her going away can be painful, while, on the other side, once she gets married she cannot visit her parents without an appropriate invitation.

The traditional stereotype of a Dogra woman portrays her as innocent, gullible, and superstitious, as a person who looks upon the miseries of life, disease, and death as stemming from the rage of gods and goddesses. She is deemed to be devout and god-fearing. This stereotype of the Dogra woman finds its affirmation in the folk songs, but also its denial, for on occasion the Dogra woman appears as a maverick who is contemptuous of social constraints, as someone who is primed to confront the conventional authority of social norms and mores, and is prepared to convincingly articulate the injustices and inequities to which she is subjected. While she can be passive, she can be strong and determined as well. Women's folk songs are a type of safety valve meant to supply a vent for women through which they can put across their bottled-up antipathy against the social order. From their initial age, Dogra girls are taught to be courteous and submissive to their husbands and their relatives.

In contrast to this, we often hear in the folk songs strongly offensive and accusatory words against these same relatives, who in real life would be treated with great reverence. Usually a daughter-in-law does not defy or argue with her mother-in-law or sister-in-law, but in the folk songs these rules of normal behavior can be set aside with impunity. Whatever thing, however undesirable it may be in real life, finds an appropriate passage in the folk songs. It is through folk songs that women give voice to their passions, their frustrations, their resentment, and their love. It is through them that they voice their grievances and show their upset. The folk songs offer beautiful vignettes through which we can look into the intricate phenomenon we call culture. Folk songs, chiefly women's folk songs, are a rich source for understanding the locale of women in a Dogra society.

Dogri cosmology, ethics and societal norms come to light in folksongs in ways that complement the existing historical record, but also offer new insights into the processes of socializing individual's development, but also a part of Dogra society.

Folksongs are vital to Dogri culture in that they emerge as the fruits of a vague thing like a folk or a collective mind, and make existent for us the natural, social and ethical, and changing world that Dogra people occupied. The Dogra rebellious spirit, readiness for love and war, sacrifice for tribe or lover is among the intangibles of the regions philosophy that impulsively appear in its folksongs.

On the other hand, these folksongs can be treated as texts for the study of Dogri as a language- captured out of the ether and potted with pen and paper. Yet these songs are basically not texts, in that they are difficult to pin down, living, flexible and changing. That these songs have chiefly been the realm of women's expression is not insignificant: they are the counterparts to the written texts, feminine in that they quietly work behind literatures scenes, but yet dynamically occupied in the process of fabrication.

For modern Dogra's, the maintenance of folksongs is a heritage question- we do not wish to be inferior in the loss of lessons learned by our predecessors ever since times

immemorial. We might want to add access to the experiences of people who populated in the J&K regions, but lived in a very dissimilar world. Nostalgia and inquisitiveness draw us to folksongs, and their rhythms, themes and concerns move us in surprising ways.

Scholars may anticipate using the folk texts to rebuild the daily, annual, and life cycle concerns of Dogra's and the power dynamics that permeated village life. Folksongs can help us better comprehend Dogri written literature, and perchance literature can help us come to these folksongs with bright lenses.

The folksongs offer the milieu and framework out of which literature and history emerge. Folk expressions can be captured by the poets, whose writings in turn can instigate and become part of Dogri Folk reminiscences. Just as Dogri written and oral traditions have enjoyed vigorous interface for centuries, the agenda's of heritage seekers and logical scholars are mutually harmonizing. Dogri folksongs make us conscious of how Dogra's steer problems posed by communal living, uncultivated natural forces and historical change, and hence demand our attention.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Deep Punia, *Social Values in Folklore*. (Rawat Publications, 1993), 11.
- <sup>2</sup> These kinds of folk songs are widely prevalent form of mass entertainment in Dogri region. They are independent of instruments. They are in verse form.
- <sup>3</sup> Dogri folksong sung with the help of gestures.
- <sup>4</sup> They are a kind of Indian folksongs meant for all memorable occasions, to celebrate festivals and rituals.
- <sup>5</sup> Folk songs sung at the see-off ceremony of the bride.
- <sup>6</sup> Gatherings to sing religious songs of Gods and Deities.
- <sup>7</sup> Sylvia Blood, *Body Work: The Social Construction of Women's Body Image* (London: Routledge, 2005), 55.
- <sup>8</sup> L. Grossberg, *Strategies of Marxist Cultural Interpretation*, ed. R.K. Avery, D. Eason in *Critical Perspectives of Media and Society*, (The Guilford Press, New York, 1991), p. 134.
- <sup>9</sup> S. D. Mishra, "Importance of Women in Hindi Folk Songs," *Women in Hindi folklore* (Calcutta: Indian Publications 1969).
- <sup>10</sup> Bonnie C. Wade , "Songs of Traditional Wedding Ceremonies in North India," *Yearbook of the International Folk-Music Council* 3-4 (1971): 72.
- <sup>11</sup> Vidaya Chauhan , *Lok Geeton ki Sanskritik Prishfabhtimi* [The cultural background of the folk songs] (Agra: Pragati Prakashan 1972).
- <sup>12</sup> S. Srivastava , *Bhojpuri Lok Geeton Men Sanskritik Tatva* [Cultural aspect of Bhojpuri folk songs] (Allahabad: Kendra Prakashan 1982).
- <sup>13</sup> Kuldeep, *Lok Geeton ka Viksdmtaka Adhyayana* [A study ot the evolution of folk songs] (Agra: Pragati Prakashan 1972).
- <sup>14</sup> K. D. Upadhyaya , *Avadhi Lok Geet* [Avadhi folk songs] (Allahabad: Sahitya Bhavan 1978).
- <sup>15</sup> Edward. O. Henry, "The Variety of Music in a North Indian Village: Reassessing Cantometrics," *Ethnomusicology* 20 (1976): 49-66.
- <sup>16</sup> They are semi-classical songs sung in the Hindu calendar month of Ciat. These songs are rendered during the holy month of Shri Rama Navami in Mar/Apr. It falls under light classical of Hindustani classical music. The songs typically have the name of lord Rama.
- <sup>17</sup> L. G. Tewari, *Folk Music of India: Uttar Pradesh* Microfilms International, 1988 and "Sohar: Childbirth Songs of Joy" *Asian Folklore Studies* 47 (1974): 257-76.



- <sup>18</sup> Avasthi, Maheshpratap Narayan. *Avadhi Lok Geet Hazard* [One thousand Avadhi folk songs]. (Allahabad: Asumati Prakashan, 1985).
- <sup>19</sup> Singh, V .V. *Avadhi Lok Geet: Samikshatmak Adhyayan* [Avadhi folk songs: A Critical Study]. (Allahabad: Parimal Prakashan,1983).
- <sup>20</sup> Tripathi, R. N. (samvat 1906) *Kavita kaumudi, bhag 5* [Elucidation of poems, part 5]. Cited in Singh 1983.
- <sup>21</sup> Jassal, Smita.T. *Unearthing Gender: Folksongs of North India*. (Duke University Press, 2012): 8.
- <sup>22</sup> Singh & Gill: *Folksongs of Punjab*. JPS, 11: 2.
- <sup>23</sup> Term used for soldier in Dogri language.
- <sup>24</sup> Folksongs to express greetings.
- <sup>25</sup> Different ceremonies for different occasions.
- <sup>26</sup> Gathering ceremony conducted on the birth of a boy child.
- <sup>27</sup> The term 'Nandji' in Hindu context is used to denote 'Lord Krishna'. The meaning of the term is joyful, happy or pleasure, father of Krishna, etc.
- <sup>28</sup> They are basically the category of marriage songs which catches that transient between a known past and a dreamed future. It shimmers with anticipation. This segment is filled with daughter's feeling of alienation or separateness from her paternal home and segues into the sorrow of the real separation that occurs with her marriage. These songs give sharp rending of degrees of attachment with family. Affection between daughter and father is sweetly brought out through these songs.
- <sup>29</sup> Term used for a beloved daughter in Dogri culture.
- <sup>30</sup> In North Indian communities, it is customary for the bridegroom to travel to the wedding venue on a mare accompanied with his family members and guests. This wedding procession is known as baraat.
- <sup>31</sup> Ceremony related to the special bath of the Bride, where turmeric paste is applied on the face and body of the bride. The concept behind this ceremony is that this brings glow on the bride's face on the day of her marriage.
- <sup>32</sup> It is the most auspicious and significant ritual in Hindu Religion. The literal meaning of the term 'kanya' is 'virgin' and 'daan' is 'gifting', therefore it means gifting away a virgin daughter. It is very pious and dutiful ritual which is said to bring fortune as well as relief from the sins for the bride's parents.
- <sup>33</sup> Prem Chowdhry, "Enforcing Cultural Codes: Gender and Violence in Northern India," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 32(1997): 1919–28.
- <sup>34</sup> Under the Hindu Succession Act, 1956, females are granted ownership of all property acquired either before or after the signing of the Act, abolishing their "limited owner" status. However, it was not until the 2005 Amendment that daughters were allowed equal receipt of property as with sons. This invariably grants females property rights.
- <sup>35</sup> Bride's paternal home.
- <sup>36</sup> This song in Dogri, set to dance reveals the anguish of a newly married girl whose husband is away in the Army. The ever increasing yearning of re-union is depicted through this song and dance.

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