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Conceptualizing Gender Stereotypes at the Crossroads between Production and Reproduction

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ABSTRACT

One of the prime concerns of the present research paper is to show how gender roles shape human behavior as well as choices – regarding profession, habits, relationships, clothing etc. Various movements related to feminism have made efforts to change aspects of prevailing gender roles assuming them to be oppressive and wrong. Gender role is often talked about and discussed inside as well as outside the seminar halls, but most often only least change, in practical life, can be noticed. The most contemporary and relevant issue of women's situation and problems at work places is something which demands much more attention in practicality and not just a matter to talk about, because the structure of our society is still male-friendly. What is amazing about India, particularly, as it has been sought in the paper to explore, is the fact that before 1950s, when only men were visible at workplaces, the outside environment was made to suit their needs and desires but that has not much changed even in 2020s, when there is an increase in proportion of the number of women working outside. Today, numerous women have come out to shoulder the responsibilities with their male counterparts. But the number is still deficit for several reasons and we see "despite rapid economic growth less than a quarter (23.6%) of women aged 15 and above participated in the labour force in 2018 (compared to 78.6%) of men". (www.catalyst.org)

Key Words: Production, Gender Stereotypes, feminism, Marxist feminism, MHM, Working women etc.

International agencies such as International Monetary Fund, The World Economic Forum, the G20, the World Bank, the International

MYTHS OF ARUNACHAL :
A READING OF MAMANG DAI

☐ **Dr. Supriya Singh***
Ramesh Singh**

ABSTRACT

Myths and narratives of a community are fluid and open to various interpretations, as well as they share similarities with that of the myths of other places and communities. Throughout history, communities have crafted stories to explain and understand the world around them. The oral tales can be seen as ancient religion specific to their respective cultures, evolving over time into sets of beliefs that shape a community's rituals, taboos, and obligations. In Mamang Dai's writings, mythological and oral narratives of her community – Adi tribe of Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh, resurface prominently, providing glimpses of the stunning natural landscape and tales of her region. Her mythical narratives are centered on the environment, with natural elements playing a significant role in the daily lives and rituals of the community. Throughout her creative works, Mamang Dai nostalgically shares her treasured myths and narratives, with a primary focus on the Donyi-Polo cult and the stories of the Abo Tani tribe. However, her creative writings basically emerge from her innate creativity and the pain of being excluded from historical records. Her work serves as a therapeutic outlet, allowing her to express long-suppressed feelings of being overlooked or uninformed.
Keywords : Myth, community, historical documentation, exclusion, ecocentrism, donyi-polo, abo-tani.

"... for many of us the legends and stories are still a wellspring of thought and emotions that are restored in a peculiar blend of myth and memory unique to the region…. on how to conduct his life and guard against the god of unexpected happenings..." (5)
'On Creation Myths and Oral Narratives' by Mamang Dai

This paper has made an effort to define 'myth' and to signify its essence in one's belongingness. Reading some of the works of Mamang Dai, born in 1957 in the quaint town of Pasighat, located in Arunachal Pradesh, effort has been made to discuss and define the idea of myth as well as to confer about its relevance in asserting one's identity and give moorings to one's belongingness. Perhaps, this vital role of myth, giving identity and belongingness is the reason why Dai, a writer from the land of mythical culture-Arunachal, has explored mythical narratives of her region; and defining or exploring myth is the theme that runs in almost all her

writings whether it is an essay, novel or poems of her. Using these mythical narratives, she has expressed her pain of being excluded from the historical documentation and her creative writings can be seen as therapeutic sites to express her long-repressed pain of being lost or ignorant. The mythical or oral narratives, therefore bubbles up in all her works along with giving several glimpses of the green-lush beauty of the region and culture. Her mythical narratives are eco-centric, where the natural elements are the partaker in their daily rituals and life's routines. All her creative writings are her nostalgic outlet where she expresses her repository of myths and narratives and the basic focus is on Donyi-Polo cult and tales of Abo Tani tribe. As Mamang Dai writes in her essay 'On Creation Myths and Oral Narratives',

…the stories are but a small part of a vast oral literature of the different linguistic groups of the region.

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The north-east region of the country is known for its scenic beauty, and most of the stories here focus on its myths of creation: the birth of mountains, stars, good and evil and the birth of man; and these stories convey a sense of grandeur in concept and feeling." (4)

Perhaps the most popular Indian version believes that Myths are the stories that recount the history of a community, providing explanations for natural or social phenomena through the involvement of supernatural elements or events. This rich tradition, deeply intertwined with a group's history, fosters a strong sense of connection and intimacy with the place, community, culture, and its people. Because these narratives are deeply rooted in belief and faith of a community, they can aptly be referred to as myths. They are passed down through generations via oral traditions, subject to various perspectives and situations, and are inherently dynamic in nature.

In this way, mythical narratives and oral tales can be viewed as the ancient religious foundation of a particular culture, gradually evolving into religious principles or moral stories, eventually forming a set of beliefs that guide various cultural practices within a community. Therefore, we may not always find definitive answers to questions about myths, but we can turn to them as guiding principles for our life's journey. While they may initially appear as mere stories, as we grow older, we begin to grasp the true essence of these narratives and recognize their influence in shaping our identities. As Dai writes in her essay 'On Creation Myths and Oral Narratives':

…the meaning of stories remains open to many interpretations. The names of places, gods, goddesses and legendry characters vary even from village to village. Nevertheless, there are similarities across the world in the first stories of wandering tribes and vanished empires. Since the history of mankind began, a family, a group or a community have, from the beginning, arranged for themselves a world in which certain phenomena were explained and exercised. So it is with the Homeric legends, hindu mythology, the gods and myths of Northern Europe, ancient Egypt and Rome. Viewed in this way, the myths and stories can be interpreted as an ancient religion of the world which, over a period of time developed into parables and a set of beliefs – through which certain concepts were sanctioned and practiced to become the basis for the rituals, taboos, and obligations of a community. (5-6)

Devdutt Pattanaik, an Indian Author and mythologist in his book *Indian Mythology: Tales, Symbols, and Rituals from the Heart of the Subcontinent* conveys a similar idea like Dai when, the origin and idea of myth, according to him, might have emerged from "…the fight, flight and freeze reactions of a community to establish paradigm of perfections of a possibility for a culture. These paradigms are then expressed through narratives, symbols and rituals." (7)

So forth, we as humans, create various mythical narratives not just by passing them down through generations, but by truly believing in them, feeling a profound connection with them, and thereby solidifying their existence. For example, a tale recounting an encounter between Alexander, the Great and a Jain monk (a gymnosophist), during Alexander's campaign to conquer the world. In his book *Olympus: An Indian Retelling of The Greek Myths*, Devdutt Pattanaik recounts that while camping on the banks of the River Indus, Alexander, curious about the monk who sat naked on a rock and was gazing at the sky and stars, asked him what he was doing. The gymnosophist simply responded that he was experiencing 'nothingness.' In return, the gymnosophist asked Alexander about his purpose, to which Alexander replied that he was on his way to 'conquer the world.' These responses were surprising and perplexing to each other because they viewed each other's pursuits as meaningless.

However, these radically different aspirations can be understood when considering their respective cultural backgrounds. Alexander, hailing from the realm of Achilles, was likely raised with heroic tales of conquerors, leading him to aspire to be a remarkable and extraordinary warrior. On the other hand, the gymnosophist, a denizen of Bharat (India), recognized the ultimate truth, possibly influenced by narratives of Bharat, who, upon reaching the *Meru Parvat*, found numerous victory flags and realized his own

insignificance in the vast expanse of infinity. Consequently, the gymnosophist's perspective was shaped by a culture where the concept of infinity held greater significance.

Thus, mythical narratives and oral traditions play a crucial role in shaping our sense of belonging to a specific place or community. They instill in us a unique set of beliefs and a profound sense of faith. These narratives are so deeply rooted in us that they become a fundamental part of how we live our lives.

These oral narratives and traditions serve a dual purpose. On one hand, they help establish and reinforce our individual and collective identities. On the other hand, they contribute to rectify the historical exclusion of certain groups in official documentation. Thus, Dai has utilized mythical narratives to assert not only her own identity but also the identity of her tribe, which has been closely tied to the ancestral landscape, the history, stories, and myths of her homeland and community.

In her essay, 'On Creation Myths and Oral Narratives' she discusses how contemporary writings from the North Eastern region explore the rich reservoir of legends, songs, stories, and customs, which vividly depict recurring themes such as migration, heroic deeds, the recognition of warriors, and revered ancestral figures and the instructions given to man by "...benevolent gods and goddesses on how to conduct his life and guard against the god of unexpected happenings..." (5). She tells us that her tribes have several tales like- how

…the first cotton grew out of the white feather of a kite, and that yes, women do not hunt; but when a man kills a tiger, he is received at the village gate by the women first, who hold out woven red cloth around him to shield the hunter from the avenging eyes of the killed animal. (3).

She continues to talk of the stories that she had heard as child "about the war between fish and the stars. That is why the catfish has a big head because it had been struck with a large rock in the course of the battle. The war is also the reason why fish have gills, a sign of the slash marks made by the arrows of the stars." (4) While talking about these tales, Dai further writes about the relevance of these tales as:

We are here today as members of a particular community with a particular set of beliefs, by an act of faith, because we reposed belief in the 'word' as composed in our myths and legends. In the world of our ancestors, this was the art of the story teller, the medicine man, the orator, the priest. Everyone knows the stories, in one form or another; and it is this knowledge that links the individual to a group. (4)

These oral tales and mythical narratives can be seen as the early foundations of a community's worldview, which evolves over time into a system of principles and beliefs guiding their rituals, taboos, and obligations.

While contemporary times may be dominated by tales of violence and conflict, Dai's writing is infused with memories of her childhood and a unique blend of myth and personal recollection specific to her region. Her creative works serve as a nostalgic outlet where she shares a rich repository of myths and narratives, with a primary focus on the Donyi-Polo cult or religion, seen as a physical embodiment of a greater cosmic force.

Her Sahitya Academy award winning novel *The Black Hill*, beautifully portrays various aspects of ethnic traditions, tribal customs, rituals, and superstitious beliefs. The novel incorporates a documented account of a mission to propagate Christianity undertaken by a French Priest named Nicolas Krick during the 1850s. It also chronicles the execution of a tribal man named Kajinsha, who was wrongly accused of murdering the French priest, when in fact, he was innocent of this crime.

The story unfolds against the backdrop of a lush natural setting, where we can see how the lives of different characters are deeply entwined with the Donyi-Polo cult. According to this belief, the Sun God and the Moon God closely observe all their actions, and as a result, individuals may be either rewarded or punished based on their deeds. It is due to this belief in Donyi-Polo that the novel's protagonist, Gimur, comes to realize that the sense of incompleteness in her life stems from breaking a taboo within her tribe. Within this work of fiction, readers are exposed to the poignant depiction of a culture in decline. The influence of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and the relentless drive to compete in a

globalized society have gradually overshadowed and eroded the rich tapestry of local cultural practices. In this novel, *The Black Hill* the male protagonist Kajinsha goes on to deliver his philosophy expresses his uneducated idea of land, God and nature:

The Tibetan lamas have books and you read your book for knowledge of God. We read the land. The land is our book. Everything here on this hill, the grass and rocks and stones is saying something. And what falls from the sky– rain, thunder and lightning – are also the voices of spirits telling us something. It is how we have learnt what is good and what is sweet or bitter, by living here and remembering what happens during the day and the night, every day, for hundreds of years. (140)

Thus, the author places a significant emphasis on the concept of land, which emerges as a defining element for the natives. It serves as both a symbol of identity and a means of sustenance for the indigenous tribes living in the area. This idea comes from the mouth piece of a shaman who explains to Gimur the essence of land to the tribal community saying- "The land belongs to us. It is the soul of our ancestors. Where would we be, what would we do, without this land?" (70)

Similar expression can be found in her anthology *River Poems* in the poem 'The Missing Link' conveying the feeling of being uprooted and the sorrow surrounds with what remains for them solely in the form of cultural memories:

Where else could we be born
Where else could we belong
if not of memory (11)

In her poem 'The Missing Link,' the poet expresses a strong longing for connection, emphasizing how much she yearns for her people and homeland. In this context, 'missing' signifies the absence of someone or something with a sense of regret, while 'link' represents her emotional connection with various elements like myths, tales, narratives, places, people, events, things, or ideas. Hence, the title reflects the poet's profound attachment to her people and land, which was absent from her life at a certain point, when she was away to pursue her career.

Throughout the poem, Dai vividly recalls her homeland and culture. She frequently mentions the river

Siang, almost as if a significant portion of her life has been devoted to cherishing the memories associated with this river. She writes:

the great river that turned, turning
with the fire of the first sun (11)

Ecologically, she emphasizes the stunning beauty of Arunachal, where the land shines brilliantly during the early sunrise. In this landscape, the river plays a pivotal role, not just as a natural element but also as a prominent character in the lives of the seven brothers of Adis, she also describes the mythical relevance of Donyi-Polo through her writing:

The river was green and white veins of our lives
linking new terrain,
in a lust for land brother and brother
claiming the sunrise and the sunset,
in a dispute settled by the rocks
engraved in a vanished land. (11)

This stanza represents a distinctive moment in the context of Indian literature, where nature takes on a significant role in sustaining livelihoods, fostering bonds among brothers, and even becoming a point of contention over land disputes. The disputes among the brothers are resolved by erecting rock walls that delineate boundaries, with the positioning of these dividing lines determined by the path of the rising and setting sun. Hence, the title 'The Missing Link' poignantly conveys Dai's anguish over her disconnection from the mainland, leading to the emergence of a gap between the Siang and Brahmaputra rivers. Through her writings, she offers a continuous glimpse into the vanishing natural beauty and the traditions of the past, which regrettably are under threat of fading away.

In the same anthology in a poem 'Small Towns and The River' she comes up with the idea that nothing is permanent except the rituals:

Life and death, life and death,
only the rituals are permanent (29)

Like Hindu cyclical philosophy of life and death, her tribal culture has a similar belief as she mentions how like the setting Sun, the graves of the dead people are placed in the West believing that their soul would rise from the golden East.

The dead are placed pointing west

When the soul rises

it will walk into the golden east

into the house of the sun (30)

This way Dai writes with a combination of a whole culture consists of its myth, narrative locale, setting, nature, environ and the loopholes of this backward interior area that was never under any scheme for development. Another mythical narrative that is in the root of almost all the writings of Mamang Dai is the Adi myth of 'Abo Tani' related to the origin and creation that comes up in her poem 'Images' where Earth and Sky are "lovers and when the Sky makes love to the Earth, every kind of tree and grass and all living creatures come into being"(Elwin, xxi) As they were cling together, there was no space for their children to move, and hence the Sky was kicked by one of their animalistic offspring,

…after their separation, the Earth always longed to return to her husband to be one with him again. But as she was raising herself to the Sky, the Sun and Moon appeared, and she was ashamed and could not go further. That part of her which was reaching towards her lord became fixed forever as the great mountain. (Elvin, xxii)

However hopeless with the future she narrates in her poem 'Remembrance' about forests that are no more the abode of flora and fauna rather are the hiding places for militants.

The Jungle is a big eater,

hiding terror in the carnivorous green (16)

She also narrates how the language of the stone, voices of the rivers and mountains are muffled and how the history, identity and myths of Arunachal are being worked upon and therefore she efforts to document the dimensions of the philosophical depth regarding the tales and rituals of the Adis in a written form that has never got space in the existing official documents or other recorded history. She has taken the responsibility to understand and pass the inherited stories of her community through her literary writings which is now serving as a means to extend it and to assert the collective identity. Hence, the mythos of the Adis became the logos for Mamang Dai. Her dimension is even more significant because the mythical essence, the historical truth and the cultural nativity that we get in her creative panorama is from the perspective of an insider and is free from the skeptical biases of the outsiders.

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Posthuman Future and Digital Immortality: Digital Souls Floating in the Cyber-land

Supriya Singh & Ramesh Singh

Abstract

The biggest challenge of posthuman studies is to situate it in human history; however, it can be seen as a part of an evolutionary continuum that emerges from within human but gradually its development would come out as a site of multiple possibilities, or better say, a future of humanity. In other words, it can be said that the posthuman events mark an intersection of technology and nature. We have shifted in the 3D world of virtual reality in the form of metaverse, where metaverse is a 3D world with life more engrossed and dependent on virtual reality than the real one. Unlike human, posthuman depends upon the concept of 'pattern' in the cyberspace and observes that the limitations of human body can be compensated by the power of cyberspace and thus 'pattern' becomes prominent over presence. This journey from human to posthuman is an effort to move towards the attainment of a kind of immortality. Thus a cyberspace body would achieve immortality and opens up the arena where one can have digital life after death. This 'Digital Afterlife' would then lead to several technical complications as in coming future many internet users would die leaving behind their social networking accounts and thus they would float in the cyberland with no one to handle their digital assets.

Keywords: Posthuman, Cyberspace, Pattern, Digital Afterlife, Digital assets, Metaverse.

The term 'Posthuman' can be considered as synthetic artificial intelligences, or a collaboration of human and artificial intelligence, or uploaded consciousnesses, or the result of making many smaller but progessively profound technological development to a biological human. i.e. a cyborg. The biggest challenge of posthuman studies is to situate it in human history; however, it can be seen as a part of an evolutionary continuum that emerges from within human. According to Neil Badmington's, it is "the acknowledgement and activation of the trace of the inhuman within human." (155) And at some other level dealing with the term posthumanism, Katherine Hayles, in the introduction to *Comparative Literature Studies* indicates that "the future of humans will increasingly be entangled with intelligent machines ... however virtual or cyborgian they become." ('Refiguring the Posthuman' 316) Thus, posthumanism comes out as a site of multiple possibilities or better say a future of humanity. Hence, any discourse on the posthuman can be viewed as part of an evolutionary continuum. Bruce Clarke, in this reference, introduces a term 'posthuman metamorphoses' with an intension that humanity will "earn its continuation only by metamorphic integration into new evolutionary syntheses." (196) This way posthuman is a metamorphosed human connecting to the worldly and systemic conditions of its evolutionary possibility. So, conclusively, it can be said that, in this evolutionary processes, the posthuman events mark an intersection of technology and nature. Hayles in her book *How We Become Posthuman*, further added the concept of 'pattern' in the cyberspace and observes that the "contrast between the body's limitations and cyberspace's power highlights...

MYTHS: ITS RELEVANCE IN THE WRITINGS OF MAMANG DAI

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ABSTRACT

To begin with the idea of myth, the discussion in the paper starts with considering its base in the attempt made by Devdutt Pattanaik in his book *Indian Mythology: Tales, Symbols, and Rituals from the Heart of the Subcontinent* where he has made an effort to develop the origin and idea of myth which, according to him, might have emerged from "the fight, flight and freeze reactions of a community to establish paradigm of perfections of a possibility for a culture. These paradigms are then expressed through narratives, symbols and rituals." (7) This way we beings are the creator of various mythical narrative not only by passing it from one generation to another rather by having faith in it, believing it, feeling connection with it and therefore asserting and establishing it. For instance, in the Hindu mythical narrative we confront a race competition between lord Ganesha and Kartikeya to take a round of the world and hence Kartikeya, the lord of War went through the continents, the oceans and so on whereas lord Ganesha simply took a round of his parents and declared himself the winner. Here Kartikeya took a round of 'the world' whereas Ganesha, 'his world'. It is to be noted that 'the world' is a universal, objective, fact based and scientific and can be explained, whereas Ganesha's world is personal, subjective, based on one's belief, one's faith and hence is myth and beyond explanation. Hence, the mythos of the Adis became the logos for Mamang Dai. Her dimension is even more significant because the mythical essence, the historical truth and the cultural nativity that we get in her creative panorama is from the perspective of an insider and is free from the sceptical biases of the outsiders.

To begin with the idea of myth, the discussion in the paper starts with considering its base in the attempt made by Devdutt Pattanaik in his book *Indian Mythology: Tales, Symbols, and Rituals from the Heart of the Subcontinent* where he has made an effort to develop the origin and idea of myth which, according to him, might have emerged from "the fight, flight and freeze reactions of a community to establish paradigm of perfections of a possibility for a culture. These paradigms are then expressed through narratives, symbols and rituals." (7) This way we beings are the creator of various mythical narrative not only by passing it from one generation to another rather by having faith in it, believing it, feeling connection with it

and therefore asserting and establishing it. For instance, in the Hindu mythical narrative we confront a race competition between lord Ganesha and Kartikeya to take a round of the world and hence Kartikeya, the lord of War went through the continents, the oceans and so on whereas lord Ganesha simply took a round of his parents and declared himself the winner. Here Kartikeya took a round of 'the world' whereas Ganesha, 'his world'. It is to be noted that 'the world' is a universal, objective, fact based and scientific and can be explained, whereas Ganesha's world is personal, subjective, based on one's belief, one's faith and hence is myth and beyond explanation.

Thus, myths are the stories concerning the history of the people of a community explaining some natural or social phenomenon with the involvement of supernatural beings or events. This whole tradition connected with the history of a group of people supplies a substantial amount of inseparableness and intimacy with the place, the community, the culture and the people in which these narratives are rooted. Since these narratives are the matter of belief and faith of a community, therefore can be called as myth. They pass from one generation to another through oral traditions and are subjected to multiple perspectives and situations and at the same time are dynamic in nature. This way mythical narratives or oral tales can be taken as ancient religion of respective culture that gradually develop into religious principles or moral stories and then to certain set of belief, according to which various cultural acts and practices are sanctioned in a community. Thus we may not always reach to a conclusive answer to the questions regarding myths but we can rely on it to take it as a guide for our life's journey. They may be perceived as mere tales of the conquerors but gradually when we grow older, the real essence of these narratives comes to us and we start observing its reflections in making of our identity.

In his book *Olympus : An Indian Retelling of The Greek Myths*, Devdutt Pattanaik refers to a meeting of Alexander with gymnosophist (A Jain Monk) when he was on his way to conquer the world and camped on the bank of the river Indus. Here, Alexander asked the naked gymnosophist who was sitting atop a rock on the bank staring at the sky and the stars about what he was doing; and experiencing 'nothingness' was the response from the gymnosophist . Then the latter asked Alexander what he was doing and the reply was 'conquering the world'. Their responses were surprising and equally shocking to each other as their job was pointless in each other's view. However, we can justify their extremely different aims when we locate them in their respective cultural tradition. As Alexander belongs to the lands of Achilles, he might have brought up with the heroic narratives of conquerors and hence he grew with the aim to be spectacular and extraordinary warrior whereas the gymnosophist, though belonging to the land of Bharat, the conqueror, but was aware of the ultimate truth because he might have heard the narrative regarding Bharat who reached *Meru Parvat* to tuck his winning flag and was surprised to see numerous winning flags. Bharat then realized himself as insignificant in the vast canvas of infinity. Thus gymnosophist was from a land where infinity is the key concept.

Thus these mythical narratives or oral traditions fix our belongingness to a certain place or community. They frame within us a particular set of belief and an act of faith. They are so ingrained within us that they become an integral part in determining our ways of life.

These oral narratives or traditions have a dual role as they are identity provider but at the same time they support in redressing the identity of those who were excluded in the historical documentation. For instance a contemporary North eastern writer from Arunanchal

Pradesh has used mythical narratives in order to claim her identity as well as the identity of her tribe that has been entangled with the landscape of her ancestors and with the history, story and myth of her land, space and community.

Born in 1957, in a small town of Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh, Mamang Dai grew with the tales and ritualistic practices of Adi tradition and hence was restless with her reputed job of being a Civil Servant and left its charm to pursue her career as a journalist and writer engaged in the process of remembrance.

Since the tribes of Arunanchal Pradesh have an oral tradition and their mother tongue doesn't have any script therefore few scholars came together using English language to institutionalize The Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society in 2006 under the leadership of Padam Shri Yeshi Dorjee Thongchi with the aim to nourish budding writers to document their oral tradition which was in wilderness because of the lack of any writing script. They are now trying to assert their historical documentation as it would give them a solidarity and simultaneously locate them in a particular place or culture. In her writings Mamang Dai exposes the pain and crisis of belongingness where only her cultural mythical links comes up to rescue by providing a base to stand upon, as these tribes miss the link between the river Siang and the Brahmaputra; or between "the seven brothers" and the mainland. This pain of her tribe finds words in her poem 'The Missing Link':

Where else could we be born

Where else could we be belong

If not of memory (11)

In one of her essay 'On creation Myths and Oral narratives' Mamang Dai writes "... for many of us the legends and stories are still a wellspring of thought and emotions that are restored in a peculiar blend of myth and memory unique to the region." (5)   The group of authors in The Arunanchal Pradesh Literary Society belongs to "…new generation of storytellers and song makers keeping this unique literature alive and evolving…"(5)

In her essay she writes how the recent writings from the North eastern region deals with the lores and songs, tales and traditions that are filled with the resurrecting incidences of migrations, the days of valour, the name of warriors and legendary forefathers and the instruction given to man by "...benevolent gods and goddesses on how to conduct his life and guard against the god of unexpected happenings..." (5)

As these narratives are dynamic they are open to multiple interpretations yet they are similar as every community or group have, from the very ancient time arranged for themselves a world of tales in which certain phenomena were explained and recognized and hence these oral tales, mythical narratives can be interpreted as an ancient religion of their respective world which with the passage of time developed into principles or set of beliefs according to which the rituals, taboos or obligations of a community works.

Thus Mamang Dai's creative writing is the consequence of being excluded from the historical documentation and can be seen as therapeutic sites to express her long repressed pain of being lost or ignorant and the mythical or oral narratives, therefore bubbles up in all her works along with giving several glimpses of the scenic beauty of the region. Since her mythical narratives are ecocentric, therefore we have beautiful tales where the natural

elements are the partaker in their daily rituals and life's routines. However the contemporary time can only tell the tale of bloodshed and killing but what hovers in Dai is the past childhood remembrances that are restored in a peculiar blend of myth and memory unique to that region. All her creative writings are her nostalgic outlet where she expresses her repository of myths and narratives where the basic focus is on Donyi- Polo cult or religion which is considered as the physical manifestation of greater cosmic force. Along with Donyi-Polo narrative, there are several other nature oriented tales of tribe like Abo Tani that we often find in her writings.

She earned Sahitya Academy for her fiction *The Black Hill* in 2017. In this fiction we have several glimpses of ethnic traditions, tribal customs, rituals and superstitious beliefs. The whole narrative has been woven in the background of lush nature where we also observe how lives of different characters are woven strongly in Donyi-Polo cult. They believe that all their activities are being watched by the Sun God and the Moon God and hence their actions would be awarded or punished accordingly. It is because of this belief (Donyi-Polo) the protagonist of the novel Gimur realises that the incompleteness of her life is the outcome of the Taboo of her tribe that she had broken. In this fiction, one can also experience the pain of decaying culture where colonialism, Neo colonialism and the strife to compete in the globalised world are so overpowered in the course of time that the local cultural practices suffered ignorance. She also focuses on the idea of land that comes out as a defining feature for the colonies and as an identity marker as well as a source of livelihood for the local tribes. This idea comes from the mouth piece of a shaman who explains to Gimur the essence of land to the tribal community saying- "The land belongs to us. It is the soul of our ancestors. Where would we be, what would we do, without this land?"(70)

Similarly her collection of poems, titled *River Poems* conveys various narratives embedded in the scenic landscape and the cultural tales where in a poem 'Small Towns and The River' she comes up with the idea that nothing is permanent except the rituals:

Life and death, life and death,

only the rituals are permanent (29)

Like Hindu philosophy of cyclical process of life and death, her tribal culture has a similar belief as she mentions how like the setting Sun , the graves of the dead people are placed in the West believing that their soul would rise from the golden East.

The dead are placed pointing west

When the soul rises

it will walk into the golden east

into the house of the sun (30)

Her poem 'The Missing Link' reflects the significance of Donyi, the Sun god as His interference resolves the dispute of lands among brothers by making walls on the dividing line of the light.

... In a lust for land brother and brother

claiming the sunrise and the sunset

in a dispute settled by the rocks

on graved in a vanished land (11)

The Adi myth of Abo Tani related to the origin and creation comes up in her poem 'Images' where Earth and sky are "lovers and when the Sky makes love to the Earth, every kind of tree and grass and all living creatures come into being"(Elwin, xxi) As they were cling together, there was no space for their children to move, and hence the Sky was kicked by one of their animalistic offspring, "after their separation, the Earth always longed to return to her husband to be one with him again. But as she was raising herself to the Sky, the Sun and Moon appeared, and she was ashamed and could not go further. That part of her which was reaching towards her lord became fixed forever as the great mountain." (Elvin, xxii)

However hopeless with the future she narrates in her poem 'Remembrance' about forests that are no more the abode of flora and fauna rather are the hiding places for militants.

The Jungle is a big eater,

hiding terror in the carnivorous green (16)

She also narrates how the language of the stone, voices of the rivers and mountains are muffled and how the history, identity and myths of Arunachal are being worked upon and therefore she efforts to document the dimensions of the philosophical depth regarding the tales and rituals of the Adis in a written form that has never got space in the existing official documents or other recorded history. She has taken the responsibility to understand and pass the inherited stories of her community through her literary writings which is now serving as a means to extend it to assert the collective identity. Hence, the mythos of the Adis became the logos for Mamang Dai. Her dimension is even more significant because the mythical essence, the historical truth and the cultural nativity that we get in her creative panorama is from the perspective of an insider and is free from the sceptical biases of the outsiders.

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