



The Indigenous Art of Dance and Its Evolution among Garo culture

By

Shamima Akther Jahan
M. Phil fellow
Registration No. 191
Session: 2009-2010
Department of Anthropology
University of Dhaka, Dhaka

466827

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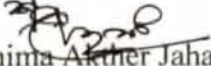




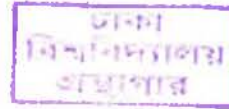
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Declaration

I hereby declare that I have written this M.phil thesis myself, it is an original work and that it has not been submitted to any other university for a degree. No part of it, in any form, has been published in any book or journal


Shamima Akther Jahan
M. Phil fellow
Registration No. 191
Session: 2009-2010
Department of Anthropology
University of Dhaka, Dhaka

466827



ফোন : (অফিস) ৯৬৬১৯০০-৫৯/৬৬৮৮
নৃবিজ্ঞান বিভাগ
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়
ঢাকা - ১০০০, বাংলাদেশ



Phone: (off.) 9661900-59/6688
Fax: 880-2-8615583
E-mail: 1) duregstr@bangla.net
2) email@ducc.agni.com
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF DHAKA
DHAKA- 1000, BANGLADESH

তারিখঃ

Date: 28.4.13

Certificate

It is my pleasure to certify that Shamima Akhter Jahan, an M. Phil fellow has successfully written this thesis herself. It is her original work indeed and that has not been submitted to any other university for degree. I recommend this thesis for final submission to the concerned authority.

Dr. Zahidul Islam
Professor
Department of Anthropology
University of Dhaka
and Supervisor

Acknowledgement

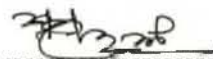
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Abstract

Bangladesh is a traditional bond society and its life is based on full of festival. Cultural diversity and different ethnic communities have observed fairs, festivals, religious convention, folklore, customs, culture and amusements as a part of social life in Bangladesh. Among all, dancing is one of the most an indispensable part of culture as well as festival. Every ethnic community has separated and diversified traditional dance and distinct cultural isolable whole which made them separate identity. At present, all ethnic communities in Bangladesh or elsewhere in the world is under turmoil and in transition influence by internal and external forces. The present study on Garo ethnic community of Bangladesh is no exception to it.

As an indigenous art of dance among ethnic communities especially Garo has been reflected on their socio-cultural life. In the beginning of the human history, dance and music and their life style are almost similar all over the world. In different factors, such as urbanization, modernization, industrialization, mass media communication and globalization have significantly influenced on social change among the Garos. The present study has emphasized on the process of change and evolution of indigenous dance among Garos to becoming part of society at large.

The present study has followed the hallmark methods of anthropology. Interestingly, the researcher, herself a professional dancer and related with in service, performs and trainer of dancer. Instead of that she observed and participated within fieldwork to collect primary data from Garo community. The study selected two villages, purposively 48 sample under Durgapur upzila, Netrokona. Participated and collected information has analyzed and interpreted by qualitative and quantitative in nature. During fieldwork, the study used different techniques and tools which are related with more anthropological. Theoretically, the study has analysed Fredrik Barth, Durkheim, Mead, Karl Marx, E. B. Tylor, N. Smelser and Dennis which is the culture of the receiving society on significantly changed and celebrated pluralism as social diversity among Garos in Bangladesh.

The beginning of Dance in the human history has not mentioned precisely. However, according to Jordania has pointed out of dance comes from human evolution past and

includes as well as phenomenon of military drill which is also based on shared rhythmic and monotonous group activity. Dance is a significant relation and important part of ceremony, rituals, celebrations and entertainment since before the birth of the earliest civilizations. Archeologically explained and trances of dance from pre-historic time 9000 years old. Dance is also linked to the origin of "Love making" Philosophically, dance ranked with poetry, said that certain dancers, with rhythm applied to gesture, express manners, passions and actions. Greek sculptors pointed out the attitude of the dancers for their art of imitating the passion. The present study has explained the changes and evolution of art of dance form primitive to postmodern stages of human society.

'Indigenous' term primarily connotes traditional or in the same of 'adivasi' which is not accepted by the constitution of Bangladesh recently. They are also termed as ethnic communities can be identified as their distinctive socio-cultural traits and ethnocentrism. Garo is not on exception to it. As physically, culturally and socially Garo is a distinct and isolable from other ethnic communities as well as society at large. At present they are almost christian and a few are their traditional religion '*Shngsharek*'. Anthropologists believe that dance started with earliest human beings, developing as a part of magical and religious ceremonies. The traditional dances were closely associated with different stages of life. However, the Garo traditional dance was based on magico-religion and related with production as well as socio-cultural life. Verriev Elwin significantly pointed out that traditional dances are a way of life, a source of life rhythm and poetry means everything to them. Therefore, the tribal or traditional dances never die and play significant role of cultural heritage in Bangladesh.

Traditionally Garo is matrilineal society under pressure of various factors to change their way of life. At present their traditional dance has been changed and dynamics to modern as well as assimilated to mainstream. The Garo community has influenced by mass media exposure and innovation of science and technology to succumbing their traditional way of life. In context of these, at present Garo community is under in transition and not to be said as a whole to isolable and distinct from society at large. However, till they are maintaining, observing and participating of the traditional dances and predominant their culture and not disagree about lost but agree dances never die from our societies. It must be preserve and formulate for the study. Peoples of different ethnicities of Bangladesh have long been celebrating their festivals and dances on different occasions peacefully.

Chapter 1 Problems and Methods

1.1 Statement of Problem

The indigenous form of dance in Bangladesh is an invaluable wealth in the treasury of Bangladesh culture. The culture itself is ever changing and has been transforming through ages. If culture is thought of as an extract of civilization, the four bodies of it are literature, music, fine art of dance. (Skelton Robert and Mark Francis, 1979). The contemporary indigenous community in the world or elsewhere in Bangladesh is under turmoil and transitions. It is not losing their traditional social structure but also coming under the influence of culture quite alien them. The internal and external forces of current changes inspiring upon them, as a result they suffer from typical xenophobia. (Islam: 1986). In context of that indigenous community has changed their distinct isolated cultural singularities as well as their separate identity. The Garos of Bangladesh are no exception to it.

Traditionally, Society in Bangladesh is based on rural life of full her festivals. Different fairs, festivals, religious convention, folklores custom, culture and amusements are mixed with the social life of Bangladesh. There are hundreds of festivals throughout the year performed in every house.

Dancing is an indispensable part of these festivals. From time immemorial folk dancing was blossoming spontaneously as a creative evolution in the mass life of village. Bangladesh is not an exception of it. In the soil of Bangladesh the creativity has been reflected in their indigenous culture, especially in indigenous dance. (Ibid, 1979)

In the ages of hunting and gathering, the field of dance and music came into being. In course of time men turned from four footed to two footed and slowly and steadily learned to balance their body weight. Subsequently, they acquired the prosody of dancing from their balanced walking. Wonderful similarity is observed in dancing, music and life styles among the people of primitive ages in almost all over the world. The reason behind it is that in ancient days, human society has advanced through the same stratum of blossoming of civilization. Though the impact of modernization has created so many changes in the traditional art and culture along with the practice of dance, still the indigenous communities of Bangladesh, in particular, and around the world, in general, are practicing their own way of dancing. The Garos are one of the indigenous communities of Bangladesh where they have a treasure of their indigenous pattern of art of dance.

The internal and external forces of change having the significant effect on them are factors like urbanization, industrialization, mass media and expansion of means of transportation and communication as well as globalization. Hence the present study is an attempt to fill in some of the knowledge gap missing data on social change among Garos. Accordingly attempt in the present study is made to analyze the socio-cultural profiles of the Garo community in rural setting in Bangladesh. The major research questions of the study is to find out how and what way to process of change to indigenous change to indigenous art of dance as well as in the process of becoming part of society at large.

1.2 Rationale of the study:

The advancement of civilization commended from the dates when people came to learn the preparation of weapons. Afterwards came hunting life. In those days subject matter of fine art was hunting, which was revealed from their cave pictures. Later came agricultural systems and rearing of cattle from where advancement of civilization started. Along with the commencement of associated and family life, the manners of art of dancing have much improved.

From time immemorial humans have begun to dance in public place in their own way. Later the art of dance was corporally cultured and considered as a part and parcel of social and religious functions. Now this indigenous art of dance is one of the indispensable parts amongst the multifarious cultures. If the evolution stream of culture is searched, a mutual relationship in the stratum of cultures can easily be accomplished in different socio-economic stages. In comparison to society at large and cities the pattern of indigenous society is more restricted within its social system. Since people of various areas and different languages and culture get together in cities, the city culture stands as an example of universal union platform for greater integration. (Nurul Huda M, 2006). Now-a-days, the projection of illusive culture of the city has deeply been falling on the local, indigenous culture distilling through cinema, radio, television and its different channels, advertisement of newspapers and so on and consequently, the illusion of it has been influencing their life, culture and indigenous dance, too. In spite of that the flow of art of folk dance has not been obstructed. Their own stream of tradition has been following continually as subterranean. The classical culture is indebted to a great extent to the rural and indigenous tradition, and can easily be understood if the names of prevalent rag-ragini (different musical modes) are deeply perceived.

As the direct subjection, during the region of Europeans, we drew plaster of negligence and indifference on our own culture. For reopening the veils and displacing the coverings, there came many a persons. But as a result of daring revolutions of twentieth century the wakefulness of dance in thirty's and forty's was confined in the trap of foreign cultures at the end of the twentieth century (Razia sultana Khan, 2011). At present the world has influenced by the globalization and millennium Development Goal (MDG) as well as science and technological advancement to pursue the rapidly change the human society, which is not an exception in Bangladesh especially indigenous community. The third world countries are also not lagging behind in the competition of purchasing happiness for their lives and livelihood. The secular artists have been singing associative songs forever, have been awakening and nourishing the consciousness of life. The main weapons to come out from this vicious intoxication of opium, "Capitalism", are the folk dance, folk music and folk cultures. The Vedas has told the whole world is only one residence, and which is only possible through the media of well balanced cultures and it is the culture which is the life of the world. (Khan Sultana Razia, 2011). In anthropology, cultures are core concept and analyze the way of life at present.

The stratum of dance can be described in artistic terminology as folk and classical. Though it is seldom spoken, yet the folk arts are generally considered to be related to the lives of indigenous, villagers or families. On the other hand, classical or long lived art is considered as civic or urban and thus treated as scholarly fine arts. Conversely it has influenced the society of villagers and indigenous communities. This culture has descended from the village society and thus from the society of indigenous communities.

It has also influenced the villages and indigenous society. This is the cyclic rotation of the cultural world. In favorable environment it has ascended from folk culture to the cultures relating to sastras, again at adverse circumstances, according to rules of evolution, it has descended from the cultures relating to shastras to folk culture. (Huda Nurul M, 2006).

The artistic beauty which once was sprouted from the combined social rules based on agriculture and villages, has gradually, included in urban arts and cultures. This urbanization was compulsorily possible when these have been separated from the ancient agricultural cultures. That fundamental relation has been dispelled along with it. Within these ancient artistic forms, now a day, new literacy sum and substances, musical attractions and changed method of presentation have been added. As such these have been advanced to the house of everlasting arts.

1.3 Objectives of the study

Broad Objective: The broad objective of the study is to analyze the indigenous art of dance and its evolution in the folk culture among the Garo communities.

Specific Objectives: To assess the broad objectives some of the specific objectives of the present study have been analysed here:

- i) To show how the indigenous art of dance is related as a knot with pre and post stratum of evolutions;
- ii) To perceive how the stream of tradition of indigenous dance has been flowing continually as subterranean;
- iii) To understand how the cyclic rotation between the indigenous art of dance is being made over the society or culture;
- iv) To find out how the subject matter of indigenous art has changed over time;
- v) To depict how indigenous art of dance has influenced to the transformation of culture specially Garo culture;
- vi) To analyze how the art of dance of Garo community reflect the socio-economic/socio-religious life;

1.4 Methods of the study

The ethnographer is a human instrument. With a research problem, a theory of social interaction or behavior, and a variety of conceptual guidelines in mind, the ethnographer strides into a culture or social institution to explore its terrain, to collect and analyze data (Fetterman, 1989). In social science, however, anthropological research is unique, since it is informal, intensive, in-depth, and above all, long-term. Fieldwork is the hallmark of research for anthropologists. The fieldworker uses a variety of methods and techniques to ensure the reliability and validity of the data. These methods and techniques objectify and standardize the researcher's perception (Bernard, 1988). Different books, newspapers, periodicals, research works, journals etc has been taken as secondary sources of information to know the state and nature of art and dance .The method of the data collection is participant observation. I am very much interested to participate with them.

Because I completed graduate and undergraduate in Fine Arts specially related with dance. As a dancer, I indebted understand and participant with Garo traditional dance which give me perception and knowledge of their way of life. Not only that it immense pleasure to acquainted evolution of dance from tradition to modern. In reality, how they are under pressure to succumbing their dance, not only that the whole way of life to uplift them as sperated. The study has conducted household survey by using questionnaire technique and gathered relevant information on different forms of indigenous dance among the Garo communities by means of structured and unstructured interview techniques. Some other methods (case study, key informant technique) and strategies have applied in gathering data keeping in mind the objectives of the work and condition of the field in the indigenous locates. The study has conducted on the basis of the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. In the present research work the initial stage in analysis has involved triangulation, key events. In the case of the informal interviews, data have been be grouped according to the topic of the information. In the case of structured interview, data have grouped according to the questions. The important aspects of observation have been noted down according to its significance, chronology, key events, social situation, people, process, and other various settings and selected issues.

Beside above in the study has adopted multi-method approaches such as participant observation, informal interviewing, oral histories, case studies, and so on. The present study has conducted fieldwork in Birishiri, Netrokona district, there situated ethnic culture center. During the field work period, the study has made an outline and questionnaire for interviewing the Garo people and indepth observing and participating of Garo made and female dances as well as collected. Secondary sources for tracing the historical background of the Garo ethnic community and their culture and dances. Here, I have gone through the records and documents about the Garos. Forty eight purposive sample, respondents have been interviewed in an in-depth method, among them nine from villages of *utrails*, and rest of thirty nine from *Kanail*, Birishiri, Durgapur, Netrokona. The study has included from different professions and categories, such as local school teacher, local government representative, women leader of the community, person related to the Church, heiress daughter (Nokma), person who is utrail '*Sangsharek*' and the common people from both the '*Nokrom*' and non-*Nokrom* category, in terms of age, priority has been given due to understand and changing pateren of Garo culture and dances. Their views was helped me to insider understanding of the Garo society. During fieldwork, the study obsereved and participated with different cultural programme at cultural center for completing the changes of traditional dance among the Garos.

1.5 Techniques of data collection

1.5.1 Participant observation:

The participant observation method is considered as one of the most appropriate methods in understanding human society and culture. (Chowdhury A; 1988). As a participant observer of the Garo community the study has tried to observe and record information about Garos' culture and lives. It has tried to get close to the people and make them feel comfortable enough with presence. The study which selected by the purposively and talked with them 48 respondents moved from house to house and observed their day-to-day happenings. Around six months and step by step the study conducted fieldwork under selected villages. The researcher also have participated in different sides of Garo life such

as the Church, school, market, gatherings etc. and visited some other Garo settlement areas and informally discussed with them their cultural situation and other issues. It was an opportunity to cross-cutting the given data on the overall changing cultural situation of the Garo. The study maintained a diary and took notes of all the happenings during the field study. The researcher had participated in the rally and discussions on the International Indigenous Day in Dhaka and the following cultural events at the National Museum auditorium, and a discussion on indigenous cultural rights in the CIRDAP auditorium. For observing Garos culture and their lives, the researcher had travelled to Mymensingh, Sherpur, and Netrokona which are the core areas of the Garo ethnic people of Bangladesh. This was to get to know their overall way of life in Bangladesh.

1.5.2 Face-to-face interview:

According to C. Seltiz (1964) 'there are several types of interview; among them informal interview is widely used for data collection in cultural study.' As for the face-to-face interview, the study sat down with an informant and held the interview in an ordinary day with the use of an interview guide. There was nothing more formal than this, although the interview was based on a clear plan that the researcher kept in mind and used a minimum of control over the informant responses. The present study tried to get people to open up and let them express themselves in their own terms at their own pace. The informants were purposively selected among the residents of the villages. It included older and younger people as well as the better off and the poor Garos. At the beginning of the interview I introduced me to the informants. Here the study explained the objectives of the study and asked for their consent on the research activities. While the researcher was interviewing, additional questions were coming but the researcher tried to hold the interview in the selected research areas. While interviewing, the researcher had to breakdown many questions to make them understand clearly. The study had used some informants as key informants. The key informants have given the researcher the clear and detailed information for all the researcher's questions. In studying these two villages, the study had tried to cross check with the interviewees for the critical issues or findings later.

1.5.3 Case study:

A case study is an in-depth investigation. The study has conducted five case studies during fieldwork, of them two are from *Utrail*, three are from *Kanail*. Case studies are focused mainly on their own traditional dance, but it also focused on their social, economic, and choices on gender roles and post marital residences. Before taking the case, the researcher tried to build a rapport with the respondents. Some of the people who have given the researcher the case study information told the researcher not to mention their actual name as some information is quite personal. These cases have not been given separately here, but the information is used in writing the entire thesis.

1.5.4 Comparative method of study

The comparative method is widely used in social research, which is mostly concerned with comparing similarities and dissimilarities of a particular situation (Bernard Russell: 1988). From a comparative perspective, this investigation intends to compare Garos' art of dance and related culture between the Garos living in the villages: *Utrail* and *Kanail*. The plain land village *Utrail* is neighbouring some Bengali more and near to *durgapur*

town with a lot of influence of urbanization and modernization; on the other hand, the remote village *kanail* is far away from the town. This comparative method leads the researcher to look upon the present trends of Garos' changing situation.

1.5.5 Historical documents and oral history

Secondary sources:

The study has collected information from secondary sources such as published books, census reports, journals, articles and souvenirs published on the Garo situation. Actually the literatures on the Garos of Bangladesh part are not still adequate. However in conducting of evolution of dance are not yet to study separately. For secondary sources the researcher has contacted Missionaries, Union Parishad, NGOs office, CARITAS library, Dhaka University Library, library of the department of Anthropology, and also visited the Ethnic Cultural Academy at Birishiri, and photocopied some documents and books written on the Garos from these places.

Primary sources:

The study has based on primary sources of data. The data collected from two traditional Garo villages by using a semi structured questionnaire. The selected questions has addressed on research questions as well as objectives of the present study.

1.6 Data analysis

The study has analysed information from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary sources have used in the analysis of the past social and cultural situation of the Garo people. Primary data are the outcomes of the actual fieldwork. The data collected from the respondents needs considerable organization in there to be meaningful analysis.

Besides this qualitative data, some socio-economic information of Garos has been analysed. Finally, the information from the same code and category are assembled under one heading. For a systemic and academic analysis with research questions and priorities, the empirical data are being categorised in the following structure. Secondary sources related to history of dance in Bengaj and Bangladesh, indigenous art of dance have been analyzed .Dance and it's evolution , indigenous dance and evolution, past and present dance of Garo have analysed and empirical data regarding socio-economic conditions of the respondents, the present condition of traditional dance, the process of learning dance and songs have been analysed. Finally to make an influence over all changes art of dance and its evolution at present domain of Garo ethnic community in Bangladesh.

1.7 Scopes of the Study:

From the primitive Stages, the numbers of fine arts remaining alive, art of dancing is one of them. Art of dancing is one of the precious and generous branches among various cultures. The flow of this branch is from thousands of years ago. During the colonial regions the flow was neglected by the urban citizens, consequently, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the worth's of dance were utterly reduced. But it is surprising that though Rabindranath Tagore was not an artist of dance yet he thought, about the evolution of art of dance.

1.8 Limitations of the study

According to Stephen G. Gomes (1988), in an ethnographic study there are always some difficulties such as the selection of a representative respondents, finding expected cooperation and building rapport with the people, and these are eventually reflected in the quality of the data to be obtained. As an outsider and with a different culture and background, the researcher was not free from these bindings. The researcher does not know the Garos' language, however almost all the Garo speak Bangali. As an outsider, I might have missed some of their discussion while the researcher was in a group of Garo people, because among them they speak in their own language. The researcher have interviewed respondents in Bengali; may be if the researcher would be a Garo and could interview them in their own language then the given data would have been more valid. In the field, at first the researcher had some problems mixing with the people and having intimate conversations with people and specially figuring out with how to approach the Garo villagers. The situation was quite unfamiliar to the researcher due to the villages which is very far from Dhaka. So with the limited ideas about the Garo culture in the earliest days of the researcher's fieldwork, she felt quite inconvenienced. Fortunately, soon after it was well with the help and hospitality of the Garo families. Within some days, it was able to become a welcome guest to them and also make some connection to people had previously known. In the context, I want to mention here that there are some studies on Garo of Bangladesh but almost no work has been conducted on the emphasis of art of dance and its changes. So to collect information on these issues was a bit of a hardship for the researcher.

The researcher was there and tried to mix with the people as cordially as possible, but one thing was obvious and that is the researcher's own identity. I am not a Garo but a Bengali whose are mostly viewed by them to be exploiters. Again, while the researcher was talking with informants some other people were coming to see what we were discussing and sometimes follow me, which it was a little bit bothersome. The researcher's guide had good connections with the people and good knowledge of the roads and residences of the areas. Finally, the study's inconveniences upon communication which give me very unplesent to compare other parts of Bangladesh. It is true pain has expected when found a man to serve their hospitality, simplicity and friendly forgotten all with the expression of pleasure in the field

Chapter 2

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework and Literature

2.1 Theoretical Framework

According to Fredrik Barth, culture is nothing but a way to describe human behavior (Fredrik Barth, 1994). Scholars have used various terms to identify culture: Durkheim as 'collective consciousness'; Parsons as 'orientations that guide action'; Mead as 'characteristics of behavior of human beings and social groups'; Tylor as 'complex whole of capabilities and knowledge acquired by human beings'; Karl Marx as 'class consciousness'; Max Weber 'beliefs and conceptions'; and Mannheim as 'mental structure'. Malinowski, culture is a system that enables human interaction. Surely, the list could go on or take another form, but what it shows is the plurality of the points of view. In fact, the concept of culture is rooted in behavior, rites, rituals, institutions, language, every day habits, religion, festival, artifacts, song, dress, mental life etc. All cultures are inherently predisposed to change and, at the same time, to resist change. There are dynamic processes operating that encourage the acceptance of new ideas and things while there are others that encourage changeless stability. Before examining the related concepts of the study, I want to explore some theoretical models on cultural change. Many prominent scholars have designed theories on cultural change, so there exists different theories such as August Comte's characterization of evaluation from theological culture to metaphysical to scientific culture; Herbert Spencer's cultural evaluation; Karl Marx's thesis, anti-thesis then synthesis where economy is the base; Sorokin's recurrent circle; Parson's specification of pattern variables as a way of cultural developments associated with social differentiation; Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, Parsons, Anthony Giddens, Habermas all of these characterize different understandings of cultural change. In this study, for analyzing Garos' cultural changes, the theoretical discussions help to understand cultural change in the way that scholars intend. However theoretical discussion, the present study has interested yo exploring the causes of Garos' cultural changes and its impact on traditional dances with the understanding of various anthropological situations. According to Hans Haferkamp and Neil J. Smelser (2003) model's of cultural change elements are as follows:

- a. Cultural change that is part of a specific social movement
- b. Cultural change apparently occurring largely as a result of a imperceptible shift in socialization pattern
- c. Cultural changes occur sometimes fairly abruptly, on a distinct social movement or set of social movements.

According to O'Neil, Dennis there are three general sources of influence or pressure that are responsible for cultural changes.

- a. Forces at work within a society
- b. Contact between societies
- c. Changes in the natural environment

Finally O'Neil, Dennis (1997) mentioned that cultural change that occurs as a result of contact between societies which are categorised as; a. Diffusion b. Acculturation c. Transculturation also mentioned that when majority culture traits diffuse into a society on a massive scale, acculturation frequently is the result. In this situation the culture of the receiving society is significantly changed. However, there often is a syncretism, or an

amalgamation of traditional and introduced traits. While acculturation is what happens to an entire culture when majority cultural traits overwhelm it, then transculturation is what happens to an individual when he or she moves to another society and adopts its culture. (Ibid: 1997) At the same time, post modern culture generally affirmed and celebrated pluralism, understood as social diversity. (Nan: 2004).

The theoretical framework discussed above has drawn a springboard for qualitative analysis of the data on Garos' cultural changes especially in terms of indigenous art of dance and its evolution. Finally, following the relevancies, for analysing Garos' culture and changes which is intended to make use of diffusion, acculturation and transculturation theoretical models to empirical emphasis on cultural change of the present domain of the study.

2.2 Conceptual framework of the study

To avoid varying interpretations, here the key concepts have been defined based on textual analysis and field experiences. These are as follows:

Indigenous people:

There is no universal definition of the concept of 'indigenous' and is a new term worldwide. According to Benedict Kingsbury (1998), it is impossible to formulate a single globally viable definition that is workable and not grossly under or over inclusive.¹⁸ However, there are a number of criteria by which indigenous people can globally be identified and from which each group can be characterized. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention no.169, people are considered indigenous either; they are descendants of those who lived in the area before colonization; or they have maintained their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions since colonization and the establishment of new states. In addition, the ILO Convention says that self-identification is crucial for indigenous peoples. Another widespread and popular definition is given in the Martinez Cobo Report to the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination of Minorities (1986). Indigenous people may be identified as follows: Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. At present, they form non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems. Following the above discussion, the Garos are certainly an indigenous people. They have their separate geographical location, social structure, culture, language, beliefs and rituals.

These characteristics set them apart from the mainstream Bengali and other communities, in the year of by the amendment of 15 th constitution 2010 of Bangladesh stated that no tribal or indigenous people exist in the country those are living in boundary of the state except Bengali then others are called small ethnic community. However the present study has to be used the term of indigenous community due to academic purposes.

Tradition:

Tradition is a long-established custom or belief, often one that has been handed down from generation to generation in a community. More specifically tradition is collective memories transmitted from generation to generation, about reactions to things that existed in past worlds. According to Bjorn Bjerkli, the concept of 'tradition' is closely related to the concept of 'culture'. Tradition becomes visible, bridging the past, the present and the future. In the past they did it like that. According to H. Patrick Glenn, the most obvious and generally accepted element of tradition is what S.T. Eliot has called its pastness which involving not only a perception of the pastness of the past, but of its presence. The traditional societies are regularly distinguished from modern or postindustrial or even post-modern ones. Traditional thinking is contrasted with progress or independent thinking. Traditional forms of education are distinguished from new, innovative technique of education. Traditional people are distinguished from the kind of people it is presumed that most people want to be, at least in the western world. Here traditional means the long established beliefs, customs and practices, which distinguished Garos from modern society and are remaining in the Garos from generation to generation.

Ritual:

According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionary 'ritual is performed as part of ceremony and always said in the same way.' The ritual is an established formal pattern of behaviors or actions observed regularly and precisely (Encarta Dictionary). Here ritual is used as part of Garos ceremonies, which is said in the same way when it is performed.

Dance: According to Aristotles Poetics "In dancing rhytherm alone is used without harmony' for even dancing imitates character, emotion and action by rhythmical movement"(Aristitle's Poetics 1966). The present stiudy discovered the dance means produces a condition in which the unity harmony and concord of the community are at maximum.

2.3 Literature Review

According to anthropologist Tone Bleie there is very few published literature about Garo and their culture. The books and booklets, which exist on Garo, pay considerable attention to the violation of minority rights and forest degradation (Tone Bleie: 2005). The first article about the Garos appeared in 1793, and was written by John Eliot, an English man (Bal Ellen :1999). Since then, the other literature we have on Garos began during the middle of the British colonial period. Later some government officials, missionaries and anthropologist studied the Garo community. Following that, research and documentation that we have are of different types of literatures on Garos, but most of them are on the Garos living at state of Megalaya, Assam in Indian. Islam (1986), in his PhD thesis has categorised literature on Garos into three divisions such as historical, empirical and descriptive, and evaluative of change. Almost all the early literatures on Garos intended to be administrative or for Missionaries purpose which are kept in the District record room of Mymensingh, Tangail and in Birishiri Tribal Academy in miscellaneously. It can be said that the early literatures on Garos are the major contribution by British Officials for administrative purposes to control and govern the Garo effectively and later some Garo and non- Garo (Bengali and Indian) scholars have done some research on the Garo situation. According to the purpose of the study, I have mostly tried to concentrate on the writings on indigenious art of dance and cultural changes of the Garo community.

Following my experiences with secondary sources on the Garo situation and from the experts' opinions, I want to categorize literatures on Garos into two divisions such as literature from British colonial period and the post-British colonial period. During the days of the British period, the most important writings on the Garos are by Major Playfair, the then Deputy Commissioner of Garo Hill. His book 'The Garos' (1909) is the most detailed, reliable and systematic writing on Garo. According to K.A.N Chowdhury, following this book (The Garos, 1909) some other books and articles have been written on the Garos, such as by William Carey (1919), Reverend Baldwin (1934) and others of the importance (K.A.N Chowdhury:2007). Missionaries have worked in different tribes; these are somehow kept in the Churches and are also important sources in this regard.

The British colonial period ended in the subcontinent in 1947. The then Pakistan after British Period very few researches are conducted in Garo living areas of Bangladesh rather most of the researches on Garo people was concentrated in Hill Garos of Indian side' (Zahidul Islam:1986). Some renowned scholars and their works on Garos are; Robbins Burlings (1963, 1997), T. C Sinha (1966), P.C Kar (1982), D.N Majumder (1978), Ahmed R. and M. Shamsun Naher (1987), Milton Sangma (1992), Julius Marak (1985), Abdus Sattar (1978), T.M. Kibriaul Khaleque (1983, 1985, 1995), Zahidul Islam (1986, 1995), Ellen Bal (1999,2000), Tone Bleie (1985,1987,1991,1995,2005). Here it is noted that Tone Bleie comprehensively worked in many indigenous communities of Bangladesh i.e. Oroang, Rajbashi, Santal and Garo. In the recent past Bangladesh Asiatic Society have almost all indigenous communities to comprehensive study on cultural life of their traditional and changing patterns. The data has been collected by different scholars by the anthropological methods and techniques. In Bangladesh there are some other secondary sources on Garo situations such as district Gazetteer, census report, statistical yearbook, development projects findings, and others.

Sangma (1981), himself a Garo, study on his own community and emphasized on the history and cultural patterns of the Garo. It is an ethnographical analysis contains with their way of life including migration, political development, power and functions of traditional village council, judicial system, marriage and family, inheritance and others elaborately discussed in the study.

Goswami and Mazumder (1972), Indian anthropologists have studied the Garo society and rapid social change. This study was based on anthropological method and techniques, shown the Garo society in India is the process of transformation. It has undergone change in the basic concept of social structure of Garo community.

Chanai (1985), talking of the tribes at global perceptions and observe that the history of tribe is a history of deprivation of various aspects related with their socio economic and socio cultural life. More or less this can be said to be true in the world, Garo is not an exception of it.

Kamal Abdul Naser Chowdhury (2006) in his PhD thesis "Residence, Gender and Power in the Garo Society of Bangladesh" illustrated the present changing scenario of the Garos. This thesis consists of seven chapters. He showed that the community is into the process of change in the residence pattern of the Garos and its implications on gender role and female power in their society. Garos are in transition from matrilineal to patrilineal residence.

Dr. Sruti Bandopadhy (1998) published in Bengali version book entitled “Bharatiya Nrityakala and Madhurarastratatte”, showed that on the basis of the philosophy of Indian classical dance and Madhurarsatattar of Vaishnava. It is consisted of six chapters. Author has analyzed the changing pattern of dances due to social, political and economic evolution of the Indian society. What type changes occurred in dances to examine by the interviewed by renowned dance artists. Unfortunately artists were not response to give answer of the objectives. However the history of the origin dances has analyzed in this book. Traditionally, the religion were played role to develop the dances by the Vaisnave. The Indian society is not a homogenous whole. Therefore in order to portray the emotions and the actions of all these characters, one must not only understand Gods and Goddess, but humanity as a whole. We dance with our bodies but we finally forget them and transform them. The contribution of the Indian culture has enriched by seven forms the history dance which related with modhurarasttarra.

Zeenat Zahan (1993) in her book entitled “Probessheka Nritee” is a preliminary education of dance as well as a first attempt to introduce of dance education. Dance of art is an incient valuable factors of the civilization and culture of the sate. In ancient period there was no language of man, they express their imagination of mind by the symbolically with hand, leg and body. This book is a manual of dance and to learn dance. It is showing different expression of hand, leg and body when artists perform and practicing. Therefore it is contributed for modern stage of dance as well as civilization and culture. Author has given different types of tribal dance includig Garo. Dance can be classified into three: one; Tribal dance two; folk dance finally; classical dance.

Dr. Sanker Lal Mukhopadaya (1997) in Bengali version :Bharatiya Nrityadhara Samiksha”. It is a pioneer historical book on art of dance and compile of more than five thousands years past traditional history in India. Author has given elaborate description of primitive age to Shindu civilization, Vedic, Ramaneya and Mahaverata as well as classical and folk, mediavel to modern age of India including revivalist movement etc. This book consists of seven chapters. Author has analyzed very carefull to history which is recorded of the achievements of man. He must trace their sources, time schem and showed how they influenced the succeeding ages and what portion of contemporary life of India and thought is the distinctive contribution of sects and creeds that has lived in this land on the basis of their performances of art and dance.

Author has attempted to analyze the dances from anthropological perspective. It is more concern of sources of dance and explain the views of idealistic and metarialistic. Anthropologists observed that the human society has different class and nation but their belief, ritual, myth, festivals, arts, etc almost similar. There mental structure of man is the same in everywhere in the world. He mentioned the two propositions of origin of dances; one imitative and another collective emotion. Author observed the tribal dance and considered it a ‘broad minded consideration’. The tribal dance is a dancing from cradle to grave. The tribe dances don’t die. The dances depend on devine origin, imitative magic and collective consciousness. Tribal dance is itself a living community that functioning in various aspects of life.

Raymond Madden (2010) in his book Being Ethnographic is a ethnographic research guide to the theory and practice of ethnographic a part from any fair dealing for the propose of research. The dancing anthropologist Kallisa Alexeyeff conducting ethnographic research in the south pacific nation of cook island between 1996 and 1998. She was interested in

dance and ideas of femininity in the Cook Islands. Alexeyeffe shows that how various aspects of culture were negotiated as the Cook Islands engaged more and more with the global world through tourism. She participated in rehearsals with dance troupes and performed outside the tourist shows, praising her development as a dancer and acknowledging her growing understanding of Cook Islands dress, comportment and performance norms. The author mentioned to relate dance is a culture of human society and influence their way of life.

Chapter 3

History of dance and evolution:

3.1 Beginning of Dance:

Dance does not often leave behind clearly identifiable physical artifacts that last over millennia, such as stone tools, hunting implements or cave paintings. It is not possible to say when dance became part of human culture.

Joseph Jordania recently suggested, that dance, together with rhythmic music and body painting, was designed by the forces of natural selection at the early stage of hominid evolution as a potent tool to put groups of human ancestors in a battle trance, a specific altered state of consciousness. In this state hominids were losing their individual identity and were acquiring collective identity. Jonathan Pieslak researched, that some contemporary military units use loud group singing and dancing in order to prepare themselves for the dangerous combat missions. According to Jordania, this trance-inducing ability of dance comes from human evolutionary past and includes as well a phenomenon of military drill which is also based on shared rhythmic and monotonous group activity. Dance has certainly been an important part of ceremony, rituals, celebrations and entertainment since before the birth of the earliest human civilizations. Archaeology delivers traces of dance from prehistoric times such as the 9,000 year old Bhimbetka rock shelters paintings in India and Egyptian tomb paintings depicting dancing figures from c. 3300 BC.

One of the earliest structured uses of dances may have been in the performance and in the telling of myths. It was also sometimes used to show feelings for one of the opposite gender. It is also linked to the origin of "love making." Before the production of written languages, dance was one of the methods of passing these stories down from generation to generation. Another early use of dance may have been as a precursor to ecstatic trance states in healing rituals. Dance is still used for this purpose by many cultures from the Brazilian rainforest to the Kalahari Desert.

Sri Lankan dances went back to the mythological times of aboriginal yingyang twins and "yakkas" (devils). According to a Sinhalese legend, Kandyan dances originate, 2500 years ago, from a magic ritual that broke the spell on a bewitched king. Many contemporary dance forms can be traced back to historical, traditional, ceremonial, and ethnic dances.

An early manuscript describing dance is the *Natya Shastra* on which is based on the modern interpretation of classical Indian dance (e.g. Bharathanatyam). The ancient chronicle, the Sinhalese (Sri Lankans), the *Mahavamsa* states that when King Vijaya landed in Sri Lanka in 543 BCE he heard sounds of music and dancing from a wedding ceremony. Origins of the Dances of Sri Lanka are dated back to the aboriginal tribes. The Classical dances of Sri Lanka (Kandyan Dances) feature a highly developed system of *tala* (rhythm), provided by cymbals called *thalampana*.

In European culture, one of the earliest records of dancing is by Homer, who's "Iliad"; describes *chorea*. The early Greeks made the art of dancing into a system, expressive of all the different passions. For example, the dance of the Furies, so represented, would create complete terror among those who witnessed them. The Greek philosopher,

Aristotle, ranked dancing with poetry, and said that certain dancers, with rhythm applied to gesture, could express manners, passions, and actions. The most eminent Greek sculptors studied the attitude of the dancers for their art of imitating the passions.

In Asia:



(Picture: 01 The traditional Asian dance)

Dancing is historically entwined with many cultures around the world. Here, 17th century Persian women dance in a ceremony in Iran.

In Europe:



(Picture: 02 The traditional European dance)

18th and 19th centuries: from court dancing to Romanticism:

By the 18th century ballet had migrated from the royal court to the Paris Opera, and the director Lully 'preserved the ballet du cour's basic concept of a composite form, in which the dance was an essential and important element.' During this century the ballet was to develop throughout Europe, from a courtly arrangement of moving images used as part of a larger spectacle, to a performance art in its own right, the ballet d'action. This new form swept away much of the artificiality of the court dance and strove towards 'the concept

that art should aspire to imitate nature'. This ultimately resulted in costuming and choreography that was much more liberating to the dancer, and conducive to a fuller use of the expressive capacity of the body. It also opened the door to pointework, for this acceptance of more naturalistic costuming allowed the development of the heel-less shoe, which led to the dancer being able to make more use of the rise onto demi-pointe.

The era of, with ballets that focused more on the emotions, the fantasy and the spiritual worlds, heralded the beginning of true pointe-work. Now, on her toes, the deified ballerina (embodied in this period by the legendary ballerina Marie Taglioni) seemed to magically skim the surface of the stage, an ethereal being never quite touching the ground. It was during this period that the ascending star of the ballerina quite eclipsed the presence of the poor male dancer, who was in many cases reduced to the status of a moving statue, present only in order to lift the ballerina. This sad state was really only redressed by the rise of the male ballet star Nijinsky, with the Ballets Russes, in the early 20th century. Ballet as we know it had well and truly evolved by this time, with all the familiar conventions of costume, choreographic form, plot, pomp, and circumstance firmly fixed in place.

Early 20th century: from ballet to contemporary dance:

Since the Ballets Russes began revolutionising ballet in the early 20th century, there have been continued attempts to break the mold of classical ballet. Currently the artistic scope of ballet technique (and its accompanying music, jumper, and multimedia) is more all-encompassing than ever. The boundaries that classify a work of classical ballet are constantly being stretched, muddled and blurred until perhaps all that remains today are traces of technique idioms such as 'turnout'.

It was during the explosion of new thinking and exploration in the early 20th century that dance artists began to appreciate the qualities of the individual, the necessities of ritual and religion, the primitive, the expressive and the emotional. In this atmosphere modern dance began an explosion of growth. There was suddenly a new freedom in what was considered acceptable, what was considered art, and what people wanted to create. All kinds of other things were suddenly valued as much as, or beyond, the costumes and tricks of the ballet.

Most of the early 20th century modern choreographers and dancers saw ballet in the most negative light. Isadora Duncan thought it most ugly, nothing more than meaningless gymnastics. Martha Graham saw it as European and Imperialistic, having nothing to do with the modern American people. Merce Cunningham, while using some of the foundations of the ballet technique in his teaching, approached choreography and performance from a totally radical standpoint compared to the traditional balletic format.

The 20th century was indeed a period of breaking away from everything that ballet stood for. It was a time of unprecedented creative growth, for dancers and choreographers. It was also a time of shock, surprise and broadening of minds for the public, in terms of their definitions of what dance was. It was a revolution in the truest sense.

The late 20th and early 21st centuries:

After the explosion of modern dance in the early 20th century, the 1960s saw the growth of postmodernism. Postmodernism veered towards simplicity, the beauty of small things, the beauty of untrained body, and unsophisticated movement. The famous 'No' manifesto rejecting all costumes, stories and outer trappings in favour of raw and unpolished movement was perhaps the extreme of this wave of thinking. Unfortunately lack of costumes, stories and outer trappings do not make a good dance show, and it was not long before sets, décor and shock value re-entered the vocabulary of modern choreographers.

By the 1980s dance had come full circle and modern dance (or, by this time, 'contemporary dance') was clearly still a highly technical and political vehicle for many practitioners. Existing alongside classical ballet, the two art-forms were by now living peacefully next door to one another with little of the rivalry and antipathy of previous eras. In a cleverly designed comment on this ongoing rivalry the brilliant collaboration of Twyla Tharp (one of the 20th Century's cutting edge Dance avant-gardist/contemporary) and Ballet dance was ultimately achieved. The present time sees us still in the very competitive artistic atmosphere where choreographers compete to produce the most shocking work, however, there are still glimpses of beauty to be had, and much incredible dancing in an age where dance technique has progressed further in expertise, strength and flexibility than ever before in history.

Exciting development of contemporary dance also found in the east in countries such as Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan.

At the same time, mass culture experienced expansion of street dance. In 1974, famous group Jackson 5 performed on television a dance called *Robot* (choreographed by postmodern artist Michael Jackson). This event and later Soul Train performances by black dancers ignited street culture revolution, which later formed break dancing rocks dance.

For the emergence of 20th century modern dance see also: Mary Wigman, Gret Palucca, Harald Kreutzberg, Yvonne Georgi, and Isadora Duncan.

Hip-hop dance started when Clive Campbell, aka Kool DJ Here and the father of hip-hop, came to New York from Jamaica in 1967. Toting the seeds of reggae from his homeland, he is credited with being the first DJ to use two turntables and identical copies of the same record to create his jams. But it was his extension of the breaks in these songs—the musical section where the percussive beats were most aggressive—that allowed him to create and name a culture of break boys and break girls who laid it down when the breaks came up. Briefly termed b-boys and b-girls, these dancers founded breakdancing, which is now a cornerstone of hip-hop dance.

3.2 Indigenous Art of Dance:

Though the word 'indigenous' primarily connotes 'traditional' and 'local', it is not wholly so in Bangladesh perspective. It also includes two other constituents such as, ethnic identity and their inseparability with the land or the hill or the forest or the valleys they have been living in from generation to generation. In Bengali they call themselves 'Adibashi' that literally means original dwellers ('*Adi*' means original and '*bashi*' means dweller). They are also termed as ethnic communities by some anthropologists for their distinctive socio-cultural traits and ethnic ethos. They have long and inherited sense of belonging and linkage to the land along with a sense of separateness of difference, from other cultural groups that may also live in the same country. Looked from this angle, the indigenous communities of Bangladesh are many in number, spread over the south eastern hilly areas, popularly known as Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHTs) and east-north-western plain land and forest areas, usually known as plain-landers. In the Constitution of Bangladesh they are called 'Upajati' (tribe or sub-nation), but nowadays the Bangladesh Adibashi Forum, a national forum of the Adibashi peoples of Bangladesh, have refused to be called so, since they claim their legitimate and equitable share in the multi-ethnic structure of the Bengali nationalism that has shaped Bangladesh as a nation-state based on unity in linguistic and cultural plurality.

Now they like to identify themselves as the original sons and daughters of the fertile soil and the hills and plains forming territorial boundary of Bangladesh in the Ganges delta bordering the Bay of Bengal. So their claim as indigenous community is unambiguous within the framework of Bangladesh as a nation-state. The plain dwelling citizens of Bangladesh are mostly Muslims followed by Hindus, Buddhists, Christians and devotees of other religions known worldwide. Muslims are the majority, followed by Hindus – both of them constituting mainstream plain-dwellers of the country. On the other hand ethnic groups in hills and plains have their own religious beliefs such as animism and spirit-worship. However, many of them have been baptized into other beliefs including Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam in the main Conversion to Hinduism and Buddhism started in the ancient times, whereas Christianity made an overwhelming influence among communities like Garo (greater Mymensing district), Khasi (greater Sylhet district), Bawm and Panhko (CHTs). Almost all the members of these communities are Christians by faith in today's Bangladesh. Conversion of ethnic people into Islam is rarely seen. Apart from their religious identity, all these indigenous communities have their distinctive way of life based on customary laws, practices, protocols that they have inherited from their ancestors, who believed in spirits and animism.

The number of indigenous people of Bangladesh was 1.2 million, almost 1.13% of the then population in the country. Now it is estimated that the total population is nearly 140 million and indigenous people have largely increased in number. According to an estimate by the Bangladesh Adibashi Forum, this number is three million in the minimum. They have also listed 45 different indigenous peoples living in the plains and hills of the country. These people are integral part of our nation because of their distinct traditional wisdom and cultural manifestations that have contributed towards the cultural diversity and sustainable economic development of the country.

Indigenous Communities and their Colourful Culture:



(Picture: 03 The distinctive cultural identity of Garo)

Different ethnic groups of Bangladesh and their colorful lifestyles have significantly enriched the entire culture of Bangladesh. For centuries, Bangladesh has been the dwelling place of different ethnic groups. In fact, 35 smaller groups of indigenous people covering about two percent of the total population have been living in different pockets of the hilly zones and some areas of the plain lands of the country. Their historical background, economic activities, social structure, religious beliefs and festivals make them distinctive. The beauty of the hilly zones as well as the plain areas has been enhanced by the colourful culture and traditional practices of different ethnic groups, like the Mandi called them Garo and Hajong in the northern part, the Manipuri and Khasia in the northeast, the Chakma, Tripura, Marma, Rakhain, Mru, Tanchyanga, Murong in the eastern and southeastern parts and the Santal and Rajbangshi in the western part of the country.

Almost all tribal languages have rich folk literatures, consisting of poems, songs, fairy tales and legends relating to their past nomadic life. There are plenty of narratives, similar to the Mymensinh Gitika, in the Mogh, Chakma, Khasia and Garo languages. The folk tales of the tribal languages have similarities with those in Bangla.

The ballads in some of the languages of the Himalayan foothills are similar to those in Bangla folk literature. Their linguistic aspects are similar to those of early Bangla. The rhymes in Bangla and the tribal languages are similar in subject, rhythm and vocabulary.

The people of different tribes have been using musical instruments from time immemorial. These instruments are all closely linked with their feelings and emotions, lifestyle, economy and, above all, their philosophy and earthly and spiritual aspirations.

Tribal dances are based on the customs and beliefs of the tribal people. Tribal dance evolved through the experience of the aborigines. They had to fight ferocious beasts of the jungle and hunt animals and birds for food. Before going out for a hunt, hunters would draw pictures of their prey and dance in a body, imitating a hunt. People danced to placate or defeat evil spirits, to prevent decay and disease, to cause rainfall to help the production of crops, or to prevent drought or famine. With the evolution of society, human activities have undergone many changes resulting in differences in dance styles. Most tribes perform dances, songs and music on religious festivals, births, deaths, marriage ceremonies and other occasions. They perform dances individually or collectively, in traditional dress accompanied by their own songs. They make their own musical instruments. Their dances are named after their tribes, e.g. Santhal dance, Garo dance, Manipuri dance, etc. They perform dances not only on such occasions as the construction of houses, cultivation and fishing, but also to celebrate the creation of man. They also perform dances to pray for rainfall in time of drought. Most tribal dances are traditionally performed without any stage, make-up room, lighting, etc. There are no elaborate arrangements for music or singing.

The Manipuri:

The Manipuris are one of the major ethnic communities of Bangladesh. They migrated to Bangladesh during the reign of Rajarshi Bhagyachandra (1764-1789) and the process was accelerated by the Manipuri-Burma war. After the war with Burma, Manipur was ruled by the Burmese invaders for about seven years. During that period, King Chourajit Singh accompanied by a large following of Manipuri subjects moved to areas now in Bangladesh. At present they live in different places of Sylhet Division, like Kamalganj, Sreemongal, Kulaura and Baralekha thanas of Moulvi Bazar district; Chunarughat thana of Habiganj district and Chhatak thana of Sunamganj district. According to the 1991 population census, there were about 25,000 Manipuris in Bangladesh.

As a result of their changing geographical locations and various kinds of religious and political interaction, Manipuri society became the meeting point of different ethnic groups and cultures.

The mother-tongue of the Manipuris belongs to the Kuki-chin group of the Tibeto-Burman sub-family of the Mongolian family of languages. Manipuri literature is very old.

It has a rich and variegated history and traditions. Interestingly, a characteristic of the old Manipuri script is that each and every letter of the alphabet has been named after a part of the human body. The shape of a letter is also based on the body part it is named after. Some books on Manipuri subjects have been published in Bengali.

Manipuri men and women work together in the field. Men clear the jungles and till the soil, while the women sow seeds and do the transplanting. They celebrate seed planting and crop harvesting in their own colourful way. Although some changes have taken place

in the livelihood, religious beliefs and lifestyles of some of these tribes, there has been no radical change in their way of life. Even today collecting fruits and roots from the jungle, hunting and jhum cultivation continue to be the main sources of their livelihood and they still tend to follow their ancestors' ways in their various religious and cultural festivals.



(Picture: 04 The traditional Manipuri dance)

Manipuri culture has a rich and colourful tradition where dance and music play vital role. The most vibrant branch of Manipuri culture is dance. Rasa dance is the finest product of their culture. Manipuri dance is characterized by gentleness, tenderness and devotion. The dress they wear during a dance is really gorgeous and beautiful. Most of the festivals of the Manipuris are accompanied by the consumption of alcoholic beverages.



(Picture: 05 The Gopi dance of Manipuri)

A very popular festival of the Manipuris is a type of Gopi dance celebrating the romantic liaison of Radha and Krishna. In the spring, Manipuris celebrate Holi, when they drench each other with colour. Most religious rites and festivals of the Manipuris are based on the seasons of the year. They also celebrate the rice harvest through a singing contest. Manipuris put up colourful wedding pandals, and the bride and groom go round the pandal to be greeted with paddy and durva grass. Manipuris cannot marry within their own clans. A Manipuri bride comes to visit her parents for the first time on the fifth day after marriage, providing an occasion for a lavish feast.



(Picture: 06 The Manipuri marriage dance)

According to tribal custom, all members of the clan are invited to this ceremony and they come with presents of rice, meat, fowls, pigs, money and alcohol.

Monipuris have their own rituals regarding disposal of the dead body. They keep the dying person outside the house on a banana leaf, while Kirtans are chanted. Dead bodies are washed with the head pointed northward. They bury bodies of adolescents and cremate bodies of older persons. After disposing of the body, the pallbearers take a bath and dry their hands by holding them above a fire before entering their house.

The Rajbangshi:



(Picture: 07 The traditional Rajbangshi dance)

The Rajbangshi is another small ethnic group of Bangladesh. They entered this country from the Himalayan region and the Brahmaputra valley. They live mostly in Rangpur, Dinajpur and Rajshahi districts and a small number of them in Bogra and Mymensingh. In 1991, their total population was a little more than five thousand. They are now a declining community in Bangladesh. They are short and have flat noses with raised jaws. They are the followers of Vaisnavism. Some of them recently adopted Islam or Christianity. Agriculture is the main profession of the Rajbangshi. They are also involved in the fishing industry. Rajbangshi women are adroit at handicrafts and good at running cottage industries. Among the Rajbangsis, the father is the head of the family and only

male children inherit the property of their father after his death as a result of a strong patriarchal bias.

Rajbangshis have their own religious rites and rituals related to fertility and procreation. Many are animists, while others worship nature, including mountains, rivers, forests and the soil. Their religious festivals are full of indigenous songs and dances. Rajbangshis have no written language or alphabet. Their spoken language is considered by many to be a distorted version of Bangla. All of them can speak in their own language as well as Bangla. The Rajbangshis burn the bodies of the dead and organize sradha after one month of death.

The Khasia:



(Picture: 08 The Khasia bridegroom)

'Better the dance, better the crop...' a saying of the Khasias, one of the ethnic groups of Bangladesh. Earlier, Khasia people used to live along the northeast border of Sunamganj district. At present they are spread over Bishwamvarpur, Tahirpur and Chhatak in Sunamganj. Most Khasias live in the border region. Many Khasia children are found working in the tea gardens in Kulaura.

According to the census in 1991, the total number of Khasias in Bangladesh was 12,300; but the Bangladesh Khasia Society claims the number to be around 30,000. In fact, the birth rate is very high among the Khasias. Khasias are short people with flat noses, high jaws and small slanting black eyes. They are fond of hills, mounds, bushes and forests.

Khasias are very hard working, and neat and clean. They have healthy dieting habits but they don't eat beef.

Usually they build their cottages with a balcony and on stilts made of wood and bamboo. Recently, they have begun to build houses like the Bangalis. Their kitchen is attached to the bedroom and almost every Khasia house has a pig-shed near it. The Khasia houses are clustered and hence they call their villages Punji. The villages are clusters of houses within the cultural boundary of their own community.



(Picture: 09 The Khasia's traditional dance)

At present, more than 80% of these communities are Christians and almost every punji has its own church. But they also maintain their age-old customs and traditions. Khasias are always on the look-out for danger. They believe that the spirits of dead children and of one's ancestors may visit a house and therefore they erect a stone platform to propitiate these spirits.

The Khasia language does not have an alphabet. Tradition has it that once upon a time they had a written script, which was destroyed by a calamity. They are bilingual and can speak Khasia as well as Bangla. Because of the existence of a social system based on matriarchy, Khasia girls choose their own bridegrooms from tribes other than their own. Men live in their wives' houses and their offspring are known by their maternal names.

A Khasia woman cannot marry someone from another tribe. After being blessed by his mother and elders, the Khasia groom leaves his mother's house wearing dhuti & turban and accompanied by the bridal party. Khasia wedding feasts consist of rice and dry fish followed by alcohol.

As with other indigenous people, dance is the most vital part of their festivals. Dance is also included in all their ceremonies. The Khasias believe that a better harvest can be obtained if they perform more dances.

The Tripura:



(Picture: 10 The traditional Tripura dance)

The Tripuras are another large ethnic group in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region. At present they live in CHT, especially in Ramgarh and Khagrachhari. It is also believed that Tripuras currently living in Bangladesh originally came from the Indian state of Tripura. The number of Tripuras in CHT areas was close to 80,000 in 1991, and it has no doubt increased considerably by this time.

Tripuras call their society *Dafa*. Among the Tripura community, all the groups and subgroups have their own dialects, dresses and ornaments. This tribal group does not have a uniform lineage system. In some groups, sons draw their lineage from the father's side while daughters draw their lineage from the mother's side.

Kokborok, the language of the Tripuras, belongs to the Bodo group which had its origin in the Assam branch of the Tibeto-Burma family. *Kokborok* was widely used in writing letters, performing magic and preparing lists of indigenous medicines. But due to lack of use, their script is on the verge of extinction. Tripuras are mainly Hindus though their beliefs and religious practices are different from those of caste Hindus in many aspects. They worship the god Shiva and the goddess Kali along with 14 other gods and



(Picture: 11 The Traditional Tripura's Bamboo dance)

goddesses. They also believe in a number of evil spirits, incorporeal beings and demons, who have their domicile in jungles and who do harm to people by inflicting diseases. They sacrifice animals and birds in the name of their gods and

The Tripuras build their houses on hilltops. They also build stairs to climb into their houses. Their houses lie somewhat scattered throughout their villages.

The traditional dress of the Tripura man includes dhuti (a narrow piece of cloth wound round the waist between the legs with a fringed end hanging down from the rear) and a Khaban (turban). During the winter they wear a ruggedly sewn jacket.



(Picture 12: The Tripura's women's planting with traditional dancing dress)

Both men and women wear crescent-shaped silver ear rings. The women wear necklaces made of beads and shells, nose skewers and ornaments on the hair, neck, wrist and ankle. The most important social festival of the Tripuras is the Baisuk that lasts for three days. It commences from the penultimate day of the Bengali calendar. On the first day of the festival called hari baisuk, children decorate homes with flowers, wear clean clothes and visit neighbours.

Elders also visit neighbours and are treated to drinks. A group of about 15 dancers performs folk dances and are offered chicken, Tice and drinks by the householders they visit. Their dances are really colourful and enjoyable.

This ethnic community follows a custom of arranged marriage which is traditionally not allowed within one's group. The father of the bridegroom has to pay the expenses for the bride's dress and ornaments. Before marriage the bridegroom takes up residence in the bride's home for two years and becomes a member of her family.



(Picture 13: The traditional dance of tripura's)

When a child is born in a Tripura family, the mother has to observe certain so-called days of impurity when she cannot cook. Some days after the birth, a ceremonial feast is organised to give a name to the newborn. The Tripuras burn their dead and when the fire is extinguished the ashes and unburned bones are collected and thrown into a river or pond. The Sraddha is observed 13 days after the death. after the birth, a ceremonial feast is organised to give a name to the newborn. The Tripuras burn their dead and when the fire is extinguished the ashes and unburned bones are collected and thrown into a river or pond. The Sraddha is observed 13 days after the death.

The Marma:

The Marmas are the second largest ethnic minority in Bangladesh. Most Marmas live in the three hill districts of Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachari. Some Marmas, however, live in the coastal districts of Cox's Bazar and Patuakhali. According to the 1991 census, the number of Marmas in Bangladesh was 1,57,301



(Picture 14: The traditional dance of Marma)

Marmas belong to the Mongoloid race. They are relatively short and have prominent cheekbones. They have a yellow complexion, black hair, small eyes and snub noses. They speak an Arakansese dialect and their language is written in Burmese characters.

The Marmas' language belongs to the Burma-Arakan group within the broad classification of Tibet-Burma languages. In recent times, Marmas in urban areas and nearby settlements have learnt to speak the local dialect of Chittagong.

Marmas are divided into several clans. Each clan is named after the place from where it migrated. The material culture of the Marmas includes many basic tools and weapons of primitive societies.

The houses of the Marma people are made of bamboo, wild grass and straw. These are built on elevated bamboo or wooden platforms (machang). Every room is a bedroom cum store. The space underneath the machang is used for various purposes such as keeping livestock and storing fuel wood. Some of their houses, however, are made of mud and built without a machang. Rice and boiled vegetables are major food items of the Marma people. Nappi, a paste made of dried fish, is a favourite food item. They enjoy rice beer and smoke indigenous cigars.

Marma men and women typically wear thami and angi. However, the angi used by men is more a waistcoat than a blouse. Marmas make their own clothes using traditional weaving

technology, although many Marmas now purchase Bangali dresses from the market. Kitchen utensils in a Marma family are mostly earthen or made of bamboo and wood. Marma men drink wine and play card games in their leisure time.



(Picture 15: The fishing dance of Marma)

The nuclear family is predominant in the Marma community. Although the husband is the head of the household, the wife also has a significant role in the family. Agriculture is the main occupation of the Marmas and Jhum cultivation is their primary agricultural pursuit. They also supplement their food requirement by gathering tree leaves, roots, and rubbers from the hill forests. Weaving is a very common activity of the Marma women. Recently they have become involved in trade and commerce. What they produce is sold mostly through middlemen.

Marmas believe that their birth, death and all activities in life take place under the influence of a supernatural power, which they try to satisfy through their rites and rituals. They celebrate Buddhist religious festivals and also perform various forms of ritual worship to placate different gods. Dreams have a very strong influence in decision making in their everyday life.

Marriage is a very important part of the social life of Marmas. Cross-cousin marriage and monogamy are predominant features of this society. Polygamy is also allowed. Child marriage is practically forbidden. Premarital love is common.

The traditional political administrative system in the Marma community is a three-tier one. Village level administration is headed by a Karbari and mouza level administration by a headman, while the circle level is headed by the Circle Chief (Raja). The main responsibility of these leaders is the collection of Jhum tax. In addition, each is entrusted with various socio-cultural responsibilities including arbitration of disputes, pronouncing judgment as well as maintaining law and order at their respective levels of administration

The Mandi or Garo:

Once a nomadic tribe of the Bodo group of Mongoloids and matrilineal, they now live in different areas of Bangladesh and in the adjacent parts of India. Traditionally it was called Mandi but at present they are known to literally and society at large called them Garo.

Because they were migrated from garo hill of Meghalaya state of India. In stead of that of that Mandi is now Garo. Their faces are round, black hair and eyes, deep eyebrows, small eyes, flat noses and high jaws. Beards rarely grow on their cheeks and they have almost no hair on their body. Mandis are short but usually have stout bodies with wide chest and thick arms and legs. Their skin is yellow and smooth. Mandis are said to have an ancestral relationship with China. There are some similarities between the Chinese and Mandis in language as well as folk culture.



(Picture 16: A Garo woman with traditional ornaments)

The Garo language is called *Achichik Katha* (spoken language of the hill people). It does not have any written alphabet. It is rich in proverbs, legends, rhymes and folk tales. The Garo songs are similar in melody to Bangla folk songs. Garos dance and sing in groups and have their own musical instruments. Garo dances and songs are very similar to those of the Malaysian hill tribe Orang *Achlis*. Garos speak in both Mandi and Bangla. Christian missionaries tried to introduce the Latin letters into the Garolanguage, but the effort proved unsuccessful. However, the Garolanguage can now be easily written in Bangla alphabet. Many Garos perform Bangla dances very well and are good at singing Bangla songs.

In the past Mandis used to put on barks of trees. Traditionally Garo makles is *Jana or nengti* (a narrow piece of cloth worn around the waist), although the Garo people of a relatively higher status wear short skirts woven by themselves. The women cover their breasts by a short piece of cloth and knotting it on their backs. The males also wear *gamcha or dhuti* and many women put on *saris*, shirts and trousers.

Garos are very conservative in their outlook. At present almost all Garos are Christians and only a few are Shansarek. However, Mandis have retained their traditional culture and customs even after being converted to Christianity.

Besides traditional beliefs, Garos follow their own religion, Sangshareq, which has roots in agriculture. They are not concerned about worshipping idols and do not bother about virtue, gods and goddesses or heaven and hell. They observe thirteen or more brata

(Vows) and festivals in a year and pray for the fertility of the soil, safety for the harvests and protection from evil spirits, diseases and epidemics.

When someone dies, Garos sacrifice animals, offer food to guests and observe different vows before and after the funeral rites, so that the soul of the deceased cannot do them any harm. Their funeral ceremonies are observed in prolonged rituals, where the dead body is bathed and then thoroughly anointed with oil by a woman while other women sing traditional mourning songs. The last offering of food to the dead is marked by a feast with plenty of wine. The celebration includes dances, songs and rhythmic beating of drums.

The rate of literacy in the Garo community is higher among the women than among the men. The reason is the matriarchal system. This imbalance makes it difficult for a girl to find a husband of equal standing. While working or walking, mothers carry their babies on their backs, wrapped round with a piece of cloth. In the Garo community, marriage within the same clan is considered as undesirable as incest.

Polygamy is not forbidden in the Garo community; after the death of the husband the wife can claim any male without a wife in the husband's clan as her new husband. In such a marriage, the bride and the bridegroom may often not match in age. After the death of the husband a woman can even have her own son-in-law as her husband. In such a situation, the daughter and the mother may live peacefully as co-wives. If, on consideration of any special situation in a clan, someone marries a minor girl, he can have sexual relationship with his mother-in-law until such time as his wife attains maturity.

While property of Garo's is owned by the women, the men folk govern the society and domestic affairs and manage the property. This gives a solid security to the Garo women folk. Garo also have their traditional names. However, the culture of modern Garo community has been greatly influenced by Christianity. *Nokpantes* are glory of the past and all children are given equal care, rights and importance by the modern parents. *Wangala* is dominated by dances in the main and most of these dances are 'stylized pantomimes of everyday life'. There are as many as forty-six dances that include *Garongdok-a*, *Dockroshu-a*, *Durata ratta*, *Oping ratta*, *Azema rua*, *Nomil panthe*, *Shaliding-a*, *Dama jong-a*, *Chu khanna*, *Chame chang-a* etc. These are all presented in plain body-language with highly rhythmic pattern accompanied by narrative songs. Group songs may include *Ku-dare sala*, *Hoa ring-a*, *Injoka*, *Kore doka*, *Ajea*, *Doroa*, *Nanggorere goserong*, *Dim dim chong dading chong*, *Serejing*, *Boel sala* etc. Dance forms are *Ajema Roa*, *Mi Su-a*, *Chambil Moa*, *Do-kru Sua*, *Chame mikkang nia*, *Kambe Toa*, *Gaewang Roa*, *Napsepgrika* and many others.

The Hajong:

This ethnic group has been living for many generations in the hilly parts of Mymensingh district. Some of them also live in the Sherpur, Sylhet and Netrokona regions. Hajong people are divided into two main classes- Paramarhi and Byayabchhad.

Like many other aborigines, Hajongs are basically a farming community.

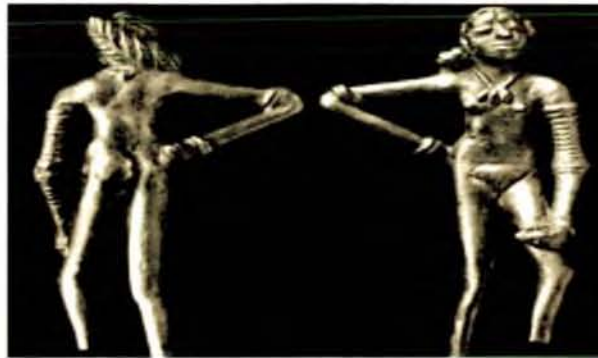


(Picture 17: Fishing dance of Hajong)

3.3 History of Dance in Bengal

Dance one of the oldest art forms of the world. Anthropologists believe that it started with the earliest human beings, developing as part of magical or religious ceremonies. These early dances were closely associated with the different stages of life: puberty, initiation, marriage, death. They were also inspired by the need to communicate with supernatural forces and to control the world of nature, either by offering thanksgiving or sacrifice. Primitive dances accordingly included hunting dances, agricultural dances, fertility dances, etc.

The moon, the sun, mountains, old trees used to be regarded as deities and worshipped, often through dance. Pictures of early humans show groups of men and women dancing in rows or circles, with their hands raised over their heads. In the Indian subcontinent



(Picture 18: Indus Valley artefact of dancing girl)

dance may be traced back to the Indus Valley civilisation, with various artefacts found at Harappa and Mohenjodaro showing different dance postures.

One of the most famous of these artefacts is that of a nude dancing girl, her hip stuck out provocatively. Hindu temples show gods and goddesses in dancing postures. The image of Nataraj (Shiva) deserves special mention.

His frenzied dance of annihilation represents creation as well as destruction. Nataraj is regarded as the creator of Indian dance. He and his wife Parvati are also believed to have created amorous or seductive dance forms.

Young unmarried girls, known as sevadasis or devadasis, used to serve gods in different temples by dancing. It was essentially through them that Indian dance flourished in ancient times. These dances, which only sevadasis were permitted to perform, were forbidden outside the temples.

Nataraj:



(Picture 19: Classical dance of India)

The principles of classical dance in India are recorded in the *Natyashastra* by Bharata (200-100 BC), who, for the first time, recorded the artistic details and rules of Indian dance. Apart from *Bharatanatyam*, which probably evolved from the classical form depicted in Bharata's *Natyashastra*, there were three other forms of classical dance: *Kathakali*, *Kathak* and *Manipuri*. An idea of these dances, and the different postures of

the dancers, can be gathered from the innumerable sculptures and terracotta figurines found in the temples of both South and North India.



(Picture 20: Classical dance of Manipuri)

Though Bengal did not have its own classical dances, it undoubtedly possessed a rich dance form. Ancient Bangla texts contain references to dance, and the terracotta, metal and stone statues found in the ruins of Paharpur and Mainamati show men and women in different dance postures, similar to classical dance postures. The dances that used to be performed at the Kartik temple at Pundravardhana were similar to the dances described in *Natyasastra*. Dancers like Padmavati, wife of Laksmanasena's court singer Jaydev, Vidyutprabha and Shashikala were skilled in classical dancing.

Manipuri dance:

The story of Radha and Krishna was also presented through dances. These dances that narrated the story of Radha and Krishna were popular among the Vaishnavas of Kamalganj in East Bengal and Manipur in Assam. Later these dances became known as Manipuri dance.

From the 5th to the 12th centuries, that is, during the period of Hindu rule in Bengal, temples were built in different parts of the country. Each temple had the services of devadasis. The main temple at Pundravardhana, for example, had about 800 devadasis. Though the forms of their dances are not known, it can be guessed that the diverse streams of civilisations that flourished in India also flowed into Bengal and influenced its dances.



(Picture 21: Chaitanya and his disciples)

With the advent of Muslim rule in the 12th century, there seems to have been some stagnation in the cultural field. However, considerable changes started taking place from the middle of the 14th century. Sultan Ghiyasuddin Azam Shah of the Ilyas Shahi dynasty was a patron of culture who encouraged dancing at his court in Sonargaon. His court dancers were said to have been brought from Iran. Guests were welcomed at his court with *raks-e-gul* or the flower dance during which dancers, wearing wide, pleated skirts, red blouses, veils, and gold ornaments, scattered flowers and danced to music.

The fifteenth century saw the introduction of *kirtan* dance by Sri Chaitanya and his disciples at Navadvip. In this dance scantily attired devotees, holding their hands aloft, would sing hymns in praise of Lord Krishna and dance in a circle to the accompaniment of tabors and cymbals.

The Mughal emperor Akbar was a patron of music and dance. Mughal miniature paintings and Abul Fazl's *Ain-i-Akbari* give vivid proof of the practice of dancing at the Mughal court. Many dance experts and dance masters developed new dances and experimented with new rhythms, tempos and beats. In the courts of Akbar and Jahangir, eminent musicologists enriched music; dancers created new forms of dances named *husnu*, *selami*, *ada*, *mehabuba*, *muskurahat*, *naz* and *ghunghat*. They also changed the dance costumes, replacing men's dhotis and bare bodies as well as women's voluminous skirts and short blouses with Persian-style garments. The dancers also wore caps. This new form of dance was called *Kathak*. The Mughal emperors were so charmed by the rhythm and elegance of these dances that they brought girls from Central Asia and trained them in this form of dance. These dances also influenced dance in Bengal through the *sevadasis*.

With the advent of the British, the audience for dance expanded substantially. The standard of dance, however, declined, with dancers themselves being held in disrepute. Professional dancers or *baijis* were brought in from Lucknow to entertain *rajas* and *maharajas* or the English *sahibs* at 'nautches'.

At the beginning of the 19th century, however, Rabindranath Tagore helped elevate dance to a position of cultural and aesthetic importance. At Santiniketan dance was not only encouraged, a new genre, Rabindranrtya or Tagore dance, was developed. The seasons were welcomed through dance. After Rabindranath, outstanding dancers like Uday Shankar of Jessore and Menaka Chowdhury of Barisal helped to further popularise dance, with Uday Shankar making Indian dance world-famous.

3.4 History of Dance in Bangladesh

Historically Bengal has a very rich cultural heritage. Bengal is, indeed, noted for its rich culture in songs, music, drama, dances and language. Its indigenous style of music, art, dance and drama is very rich. Bengali is one of the oldest languages in the world. According to statistics, jointly with Spanish, Bengali is the fourth largest language group in the world, only surpassed by Chinese, English and Hindi. It is the first of Indian languages to develop western style secular fiction and drama. It originated from the Indo-Aryan family of languages in the 7th century, thus making it comparable to English, French and German. Bengali language is much older than Hindi, Urdu and even Portuguese, Spanish and many other established modern languages.

In the middle ages, Bengali was already a well-established language with popular poets like Bidyapati, Chandidas, Daulat Kazi and Alawol. It was during this period of middle ages that the famous Indian epics Ramayana and Mahabharata were translated in lyric forms from Sanskrit into Bengali by Krittibas and Kashiram Das respectively. This period also saw a rich output of romantic songs, poems and dance centering around the love of Radha and Krishna. These were simply superb in their wording, rhythm and style.

However, things started changing rapidly about 200 years ago. With the emergence of some great personalities like Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-91), Michael Madhusudan Datta (1824-73) and Bankim Chatterjee (1838-94) Bengali language and literature really got a new life. About one hundred and forty years ago came the famous Bengali poet Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) and then rebel Poet Kazi Nazrul Islam appeared in 1899. These two great Bengali poets have actually initiated a new era for Bengali language and culture. Tagore represented this new era of cultural modernisation; others followed him almost as disciples. Palli Kabi Jasimuddin was also one of them. Tagore was urban, sophisticated and universal; Nazrul exhibited his spirit of protest and opposition to all social injustice, discrimination, oppression and exploitation while Jasimuddin vastly remained rural and provincial in his approach. Their common bond was their liberal outlook for secular Bengali culture.

Music, songs, drama and dances are also part of rich Bengali culture and there are three mainstreams of this Bengali Culture: folk, modern and classical. Folk music mainly based is rural Bengal. It has been nurtured by the village singers, musicians, actors and dancers. With sweet melodies, touching words of love, tragedy and devotion, folk music is the most popular form of music in all over Bengal. The best known forms of folk music are bhatiali, baul, bhawaiya, jaari, marfati and murshidi. Lalan Fakir, Hasan Raja, Nirmalendu Chowdhury, Abbasuddin Ahmed, Shachin Dev Burman, Purnadas Baul, Sadhan Bairagi and Abdul Halim are some of the greatest names in Bengali folk music.

On the other hand, the pioneers of modern Bengali music were, indeed, the world famous Nobel Laureate poet Rabindranath Tagore and the rebel poet Kazi Nazrul Islam. Tagore

initiated a blend of East and West and Nazrul experimented with the synthesis of folk and middle eastern strains.

Bengal also shares the rich tradition of classical music of the subcontinent. Indeed, Bengal has produced many musicians and maestros of international repute like Ustad Alauddin Khan, Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pandit Ajoy Chakrabarty and Pandit Ravi Shankar who have successfully made sitar and sarode popular all over the world.

Before I conclude let me describe a few words about the musical instruments which are also playing vital roles to promote the rich Bengali culture and its excellence. The typical Bengali folk musical instruments are Ektara (one string), Dotara (two, but actually four strings), Ghungur, Khol, Mandira, Behala (violin) and Banshi (flute) and the classical musical instruments are Sitar, Sarode, Tanpura, Sehnai, Eshraj, Pakhwaj, Tabla and Harmonium. Even now a large number of people in the villages of Bangladesh, West Bengal and Tripura regularly listen to the folk drama called Jatra and the age old melodic folk songs.

Bengali Performing Arts' aim is to promote this rich Bengali cultural heritage and its excellence by organising year-round quality cultural programmes and to make it more and more familiar which, I believe, help in enriching our multi-cultural society in a cosmopolitan Scotland (Dr. Nirmal C. Dhar

After the Partition of India, Bulbul chowdhury, who had gained some fame before 1947, made dance popular among Muslims. His wife, Afroza Bulbul, was also a dancer and helped to show that Muslim women could also dance and yet continue to be respectable. Others who contributed to developing and popularising dance in East Pakistan were Gauhar jamil, who founded Shilpakala Bhaban in 1948, Sajedur Rahman, Zulfikar, Nizamul Huq and Mrinmay Dasgupta.

With a gradual change in the outlook of conservative Muslim society, middle-class and upper middle-class girls took up dancing. A number of Dance dramas, such as Shakuntala, Meghdut, Sonar Nupur, were staged in which educated young women including Laila samad, Rokeya Kabir, Rawshan jamil, Jaharat Ara, Munimunessa, Kulsum Huda, Naïma Ahmed, Lily Khan, Rozy Majid, Momtaz, Meher Ahmed, Zeenat Ahmed, Selina Bahar Zaman took part. Men and women did not dance together, so female artistes played male roles. Apart from Rawshan Jamil who later made a name for herself as a stage and screen actress, most of the other women were amateurs, who went on to other professions.

During the mid-fifties, Sajedur Rahman broke the taboo against men and women dancing together. The Language movement gave further impetus to dancing and led to dances inspired by the themes of revolution and Bengali nationalism. This trend got a further impetus during the election of 1954. After the premature death of Bulbul Chowdhury in 1954, his friends and admirers, including Mahmud Nurul Huda, Mohammad Modabber and Begum Anwara Bahar Chowdhury, set up Bulbul lalitakala academy (BAFA) to commemorate his memory and to carry on his work in music and dance.

BAFA contributed greatly to the further breaking down of the taboo against dance. Teachers like Ajit Sanyal, Bhaktimay Dasgupta, Gazi alauddin mannan, Samar Bhattacharya, and Babu Ramsingh nurtured young talents and helped create a generation

of dancers. BAFA staged many dance dramas of Rabindranath Tagore directed by Bhaktimay Dasgupta.

With the setting up of Chhayanaat in the sixties, a new impetus was added to cultural pursuits. Sanjida Khatun and Wahidul Huq played the main role in organising this institution. Other organisations which contributed to dance at this time were Jago art centre of Gauhar Jamil and Nikkan Lalita Academy of GA Mannan. Many young and promising dance artistes graduated from these organisations, among them, Rahiza Khanam Jhunu, Dalia Nilufar, Mandira Nandi, Nargis Morsheda, Alpana Momtaz, Kamal Lohani, Anjali, Laila Khan, Ajit De, Dulal Talukder, Kajal Ibrahim, Minu Huq, Doli Iqbal, Amanul Huq, Pijush Kiron Pal, Selina Mohsin, Zeenat Barkatullah, Lubna Mariam, Pinu Khan, Amir Hossain Babu, Selina Hossain, Jhula Rashid, Mili Kazi, Sharmin Hasan and Laila Hasan. Kathak was popular at this time, partly perhaps in the belief that it was of Mughal, that is, of Muslim, origin.

After 1971, dance became more acceptable. It also became realistic, with artistes and directors trying to reflect life and society through dance. The War of liberation and the independence of the country figured prominently as themes. New efforts were made to portray various facets of life through dance as well as to create a dance that truly reflected the new nation that had come into being. In addition to the earlier organisations, other new organisations including Bangladesh shilpakala academy encouraged dance and helped train young people in dance. Many artistes like Pijush Kiron Pal, Rahiza Khanam, Alpana Momtaz, Rawshan Jamil, Jinnat Jahan, Golam Mostafa, Amanul Huq, Hasan Imam, Dipa Khandaker, Shameem Ara Nipa and Shibli Mohammad did some experimental work.

Shibli Mohammad's work specially should be noted. He attempted to rejuvenate the local dance by uniting it with ballet. For example, he used the European style of dance to present Rabindranath Tagore's poem, Jhulan. Other directors have also been trying to create new types of dances. Dipa Khandaker is prominent among them, as is Nataraj. They were also the first to present dances at the Shaheed minar.

With the establishment of Shilpakala Academy after independence, opportunities for dance artistes have increased. Branches of the Academy have been set up throughout the country, and scope for dancing has expanded further. Many dance artistes have gone to India for higher training on scholarships and, on their return, have added new dimensions to dance. Among the prominent dance artistes today are Belayet Hossain Khan, Sukla Sarker, Sarmila Bandyopadhyay, Saju Ahmed, Soma Momtaz, Shibli Mohammad, Aminul Islam Hiru, Tamanna Rahman, Munnum Ahmed, Tabassum Ahmed, Biplab Kar and Baby Rozario. Bangladesh Television televises dance programmes on important occasions. It also telecast Rumjhum, a programme teaching dance, during 1983-85 and 1994-95.

Both classical and folk forms of dance coexist in Bangladesh. While Kathak had been popular before 1971, other classical dance forms like Bharatnatyam, Odissi and Manipuri are becoming popular as well. Odissi dance was almost unknown in Bangladesh. In the past few years, however, Indian experts have offered training to Bangladeshi dance artistes and thus made this dance form increasingly popular in Bangladesh.

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation has also encouraged the development of new forms of folk dance showing rural activities such as sowing, reaping, threshing, etc or narrating the people's story of the Liberation War. Receptions, especially those for foreign dignitaries, usually have a number of dance items inspired by the history and culture of Bangladesh. Celebrations welcoming spring or summer include seasonal dances. Dance is also an indispensable part of Jatra as well as commercial films.

3.5 Indigenous Dance of Garo

Let us begin with a commonest definition of culture that it is an aesthetic pursuit of a person or a community giving vent to their lifestyle in its totality. The Garo culture, which is essentially traditional even at the outset of twenty-first century, is no exception to it. The cultures of all indigenous and local communities of Bangladesh are agro-based, eco-based and ritual-based including that of the Garos. Agriculture presupposes land, instruments for cultivation, water, seeds, fertility and safe harvesting. Joys and sorrows of our traditional people are indissolubly linked with these factors. They sing and dance, play and act, narrate ballads and improvise rhymed stories while tilling the land, sowing the seeds, nourishing the plants, harvesting the crops, offering the new rice to the sun-god and creator, and making a wild festival of dances accompanied by music and drinks as a final offering and gratitude of the giver of food and wealth to them.

The cultural history of the Garos is as varied as the history of their evolution from a hill-people believing spirits to modern men embracing Christianity. Their culture is as diversified as that of any other indigenous community of Bangladesh, a country of plains, rivers and hills in the main. Lands, hills, forests and water constitute the womb of its culture. The earliest expressions were linked with all these factors. However, the starting point is the Jum or shifting cultivation of the hills, since one of their ancient abodes was the hilly area called Garopahar bordering the northern part of Bangladesh. The festivals as composite TCEs (Traditional Cultural Expressions of the Garos) are presented below chronologically as far as possible:

(1) **Agamalka** : It starts with the agricultural year. It is the first festival to begin with jum cultivation on the hills. First phase of jum is to cut, burn and clear the hill-land for sowing seeds. The burnt ashes are used as fertilizers. The purpose of this festival is to get rid of bad influence of spirits, to ensure grace of gods for fertility, sunshine, rains and good harvest. Some rituals like sacrificing eggs by every family, a chicken by village chief *Nokna*, throwing seeds all around along with eating, drinking, singing and dancing in groups are quite noteworthy. It continues till the end of sowing seeds. This festival is almost endangered now, since the Garos now living in Bangladesh are no more hill-dwellers nor they have enough forest land to continue with jum cultivation. It has happened due to a host of factors that includes change of religion and violation of their customary land rights (*Aking* rights) by the majority people and the government policy in most cases.

(2) **Rangchugala**: It follows the final cultivation of the field since the *Sangsarek* Garos believe that it is their holy duty to offer first fruits of harvest to the deities who have blessed them. *Achik* is the mother tongue of the Garos. In the *Achik* language *Rangchu* means a kind of preparation of dried rice, and gala means to throw it around. This festival is still in vogue.

(3) **Jame Gappa Ahua** takes place after the completion of paddy harvest. This is associated with the sacrifice of a dried fish by all the households. Then the festival of collective merriment continues for several days. This merrymaking with intangible TCEs like singing and dancing is being revitalized nowadays.

(4) **Wanna or Wangala** is the most prominent and representative of the Garo traditional culture depicting almost all the events of their day-to-day life. This is indeed a carnival held in the post-harvest period in the month of October. It is a fertility ritual performed for propitiating the *Sangsarek* deity Saljong, who stands as giver of food and fortune to them. Saljong is worshipped as Sun-God and Creator of the universe. The festival is celebrated for three days at a go and it starts with the pronouncement of village chief, *Nokma*. Before the start of the ceremony, the village is cleaned, houses are repaired, *Chu* or rice beer is prepared, new clothes and necessary domestic things are bought by the villages. The ceremony of the first two days are called *Chu-rugala* and *Gakhat-a* respectively. Cows and pigs are sacrificed and rice beer is distributed among the festive people in abundance. Nights are characterized by singing, dancing along with series of incantations, rites and rituals. Other common foods include *Nakham* (dried fish), beef, *Miwa* (bamboo stems) etc. Wangala was long forgotten as a festival among Christian Garos since it depicted a kind of pagan way of life. But for over a decade this festival has been revitalized by the progressive tradition searchers of the community. However, the ritual has changed making it almost a Christian thanksgiving ceremony. *Saljong* is no more remembered. Instead of the village Chief *Nokma*, the Father of the Church starts the ceremony formally.

(5) **Traditional Dances:** Wangala is dominated by dances in the main and most of these dances are 'stylized pantomimes of everyday life'. There are as many as forty-six dances that include *Garongdok-a*, *Dockroshu-a*, *Durata ratta*, *Oping ratta*, *Azema rua*, *Nomil panthe*, *Shaliding-a*, *Dama jong-a*, *Chu khanna*, *Chame chang-a* etc. These are all presented in plain body-language with highly rhythmic pattern accompanied by narrative songs.

(6) **Songs, ballads and musical instruments:** Most of the long forgotten traditional songs and ballads have come back to life after revival of Wangala in a modified form. Among popular songs *Ajia*, *Ahaoe*, *Dani doka*, *Rey Rey*, *Dura*, *Khabi*, *Ringa* and *Gollo* are frequently sung during different festivals and fiestas. Two most known ballads narrating the origin of life and its transformation that has evolved later on are *Sherenjeen* and *Shonajeen*. These ballads have stimulated creativity in the contemporary Garo poets who are contributing to contemporary Bengali poetry significantly. It is to be noted that almost of the Garo people are now bilingual, speaking and writing Bengali instead of their mother tongue *Achik*. Commonest musical instruments are handmade flutes, drums etc such as *Dama*, *Kram*, *Shinga*, *Elongma*, *Banshi*, *Nagra*, *Kamal Jakmora*, *Aduru*, *Rangbong*, *Oru*, *Ganganda*, *Dimsrang* etc.

(7) **Dress and ornaments:** Like all the indigenous communities of Bangladesh the Garos have their own weavers and jewelers. Now the educated Garos wear westernized dress like shirt, trousers etc. The traditional Garo male dress is *Gando*. It is a seven-foot long cotton made cloth used as a loose under wear. They also wear *Pagri* or turban on their heads. The female wears produced in their domestic handlooms are very colorful and attractive. These dresses include *Dokmanda* and *Doksha*. The indigenous ornaments still used by the village women are very fashionable. Mention may be made of *Jaksam*,

Ripobok, Thang Shora, Shengkhi, Filni, Nathek Jasrang etc. All the Garo festivals including Wangala are comprehensive exhibitions of these ornaments, dresses, songs, ballads, dances and merrymakings presenting the diversity and aesthetic excellence of their cultural milieu and creativity.

Chapter 4

Anthropological Perspectives of Dance

4.1: Origin of dance:

The origin of dance is complex. National and international scholars has serached to origin of dance and expressed different perspectives. From that views magic, posture of primitive man, posture of production and livelihood, fertility cult and divine origin is the sources and origin of dance. The approaches of dance has divided into two.

Firstly, idealistic approach which is related with legendary of mythology and devine origin. Secondly, materialistic approach is related to imitative magic and collective consciuosness.(Mukhapedaya: 1997).Without mentioned the data and year, anthropologist was collected information from prehistoric age of the human society and basis of economic and social structure. On the basis of prehistoric age origin of dance has two propositions as follows;

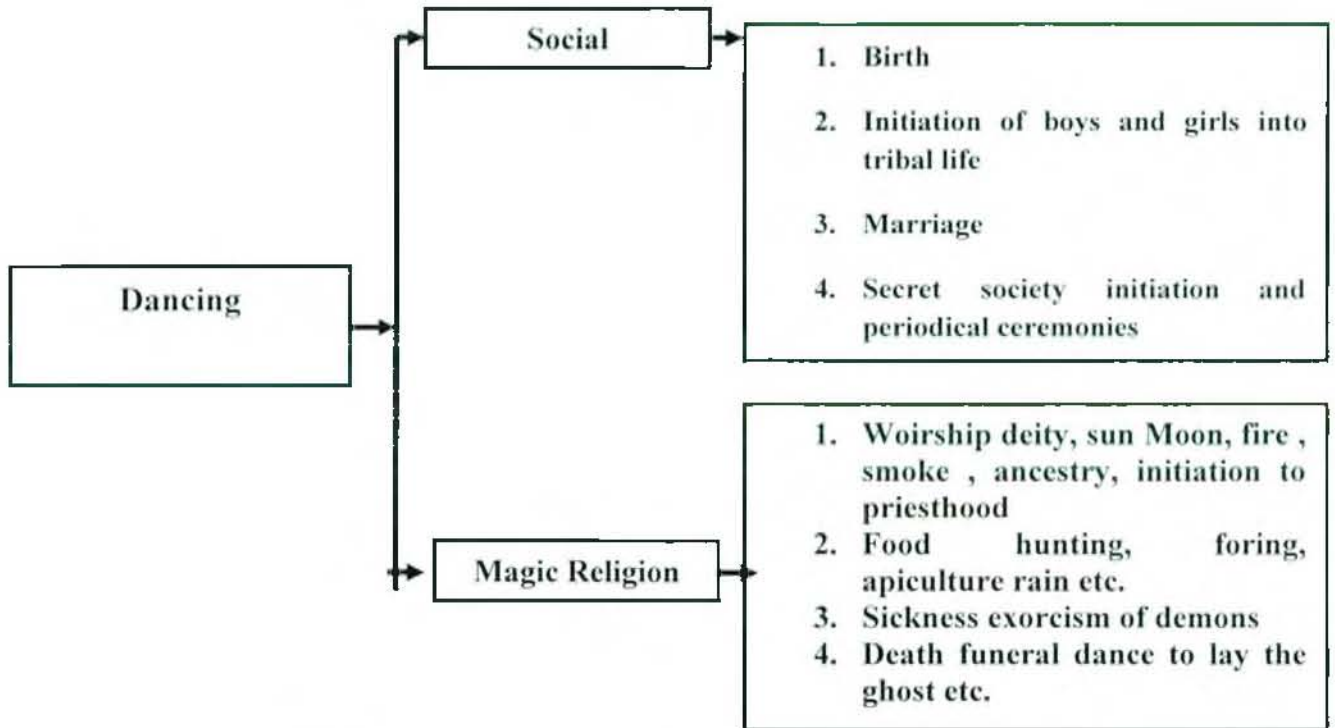
- a) Origin of dance was based on imitative magic; and
- b) In the stages food production directly or indirectly was based on collective emotion.(Ibid: 1997)

In the primitive stage men work with together due to collective emotion and belief. "The three arts of dancing, magic and poetry, began as one. Their sources was the rythmical movement of the human beliefs engaged in collective labour" (Quated from Mukhapadaya 1997). The totem and taboos as well as the tribe and clan was played the traditional development of dances in the history of human society. This development was based on magic.The belief and ritual, dance, music,song, arts, values and norms of the primitive age was on magic . It is critically analyzed by Ernest Fischer and stated that "we may conclude from a constantly growing wealth of evidence that art in its origin was magic, a magic aid towards mastering a real but unexplored world. Religion, science and art were combined in a latent form germinally as it were in magic.(Fischer: 1964). Anthropologically, we can say that once magic influenced traditional form of human nature and society **size** one of the power in the imagination of what work means in reality. Anthropoligst George Thomson has stated that primitive magic is founded on the notion that, by creating the illusion that you control reality, you can actually control it. It is an illusory techniques complementary to the deficiencies of the real technique" (Thomson: 1949). In fact anthropologists observed and found that the primitive man was believed that 'Black magic and influenced it their social life'. In Bangladesh ethnic groups have attained by ceremonies which believed to influence the course of nature. Traditionally primitive man does not go to church and prostrate himself before a false God, they went in a group and dances a Sun dance, a wind dance or a rain dance. At the same time when they hunting animals such as bear they started bear dance.(Harrision: 1913), refering to the rituals of the potato dance of the Maoris are Polynesian (Bhattacharyya: 1968), bring down rain for the crops and to secure the property of herds (Keith: 1924). The way of the life of the primitive man was influenced by magic and their work on collective impetus as well as song and dance to collective and common emotion or consciuosness.

4.2 Indigenous dance:

The evolution of indigenous dance has related with the insightness. Plato and Aristotle concepts of idealizing imitation of nature. W. D. Hambly has expressed the perspectives of tribal dance under the consideration of the students of primitive music and dancing will have to cultivate of 'a habit of broadminded consideration' for the actions of backward races. In other words, he must have imaginations and sympathy combined with the power of temporarily detaching himself from his own mental training and view point (Hambly: 1926). However we must be started examine and analyzed of tribal dances on the basis of past environment and development. It is agreed to Indian musical theorist Swami Prajnanade (1961) western musical theorist Morrium Sanider stated that primitive music is a separated fields of its own., but to a much greater extent than art music it is bound up with everyday life and with many special factors; pshychological, sociological, religion, symbolic, and linguistic. From that reason, Sanider told that music and dancing create movement which generates something that is more than the original movement itself.(Quated from Mukarhapandeya: 1997). Tribal dance is a main sources of dance to development and transform into modern clasical as well as neo clasical dance. It is related to the statement of Sanider nevertheless even in the oldest culture we find the precondition of art; the mastery and more or less conscious shaping of the medium of expression. Where the singer who is at the same time dancing, tries to achieve acertain regularly of his movements his singing takes on regular forms. (Ibid: 1997).

In the approach of pshycho analysis of dances of tribal dance anthropologists A. R. Brown wrote in his book "The Andaman Islanders" that "A recent investigation in the Andamen Islanders states that the pshychology of dancing offeres a wide field for study, that has so far as I know been bearly torched. The dance produces a condition in which the unity, harmony, and concord of the community are at a maximum (Brown: 1922). Another study had conducted by Debandra Das Gupta used the pshychological theory of emotion. He has analyzed Indian theater and dance based on the emotion theory. But it should be analyzed on the basis of applied anthropology. At present dance undertake in ethnographic research in the South Pacific nations of the Cook Islands between 1996 and 1998. In dance and ideas feminity and performative aspects of culture attempts to be with people of differeing dispositions, histories and behaviours ethnographers have to in real time(Madden: 2010).Tradotionally, tribal dances has existed in Bangladesh as well as elsewhere in the world. This dancing from caradle to grave and developed to different ritual observed by ethnic groups of Banladesh. Garo is not an exception to it. Traditional Garo religion based on animism and magic. According to W. D. Hambly made a list of tribal dance and nature of song related with dance.



(Diagram: 02 Tribal Dance)

(Sources: Hambly, 1926)

Garo dance is concentrate on food production hervasting and funeral dances. These dances come from magic and religion which is continues generation to generation. Till they are followed their tradition but various internal and external forces has influenced to turmoil and changes culture and social life including dance. However, they believed that dance is integrating and assmilating and factors of Garo's socio cultural life as well as made them distinct from others and identified as a 'isolable whole' from others of tradition. According to Verrier Elwin significantly stated that for the tribal people the dance is not an optional luxury' it is a way of life, a source of life rhythm and poetry means everything to them. The tribe that dances does not die. Mukhapadhay: 1997). In modern age which is true perception that tribal dance never be die or attached with our cultural heriatege and play significant role to nation building continuum of Bangladesh and elsewhere in the World.

Chapter 5

Dance and evolution

5.1 Indigenous Dance and evolution

Culture contact and change is a very widespread process under the present conditions as dependence on the products and institutions of industrial societies spread in all parts of the world. I want to analyze the interconnection by looking at the agents of change the word “change” denotes a difference in anything observed over some period of time change also takes the form of replacement. A new material or non-material form supplants an old one. However, ethnic groups maintain themselves and thus clearly affected. But because of having the variable of regional security they are not fundamentally changed. This process is going on generation by generation and at last it will be presented in a cultural evolution.

Indigenous traditional knowledge refers to the complex bodies and systems of knowledge, know-how, practices and representations maintained and developed by indigenous peoples around the world, drawing on a wealth of experience and interaction with the natural environment and transmitted orally from one generation to the next. Traditional knowledge tends to be collectively owned, whether taking the form of stories, songs, beliefs, customary laws and artwork or scientific, agricultural, technical and ecological knowledge and the skills to implement these technologies and knowledge. Not only does traditional knowledge provide indigenous peoples with tremendous possibilities for their daily life and sustainable and collective development as peoples, it also reflects indigenous peoples’ holistic worldviews, which are considered as a most important source of the world’s cultural and biological diversity. Indigenous knowledge is embedded in community practices, institutions, relationships and rituals and is inextricably linked to indigenous peoples’ identity, their experiences with the natural environment and hence their territorial and cultural rights. Indigenous peoples therefore place a great deal of importance on passing this knowledge on to future generations—not only for the sake of preserving the knowledge, but also for preserving their own cultures and identities. A great deal of traditional knowledge, including customary laws and folklore, has been undermined and destroyed by colonizers and post-colonial states who imposed their own systems of law, knowledge and worldviews on indigenous people. Today, there is an increasing appreciation of the value and potential of traditional knowledge. International law, for instance, recognizes that such knowledge forms an integral part of indigenous cultures and, as a consequence, to deprive indigenous peoples of their traditional knowledge and folklore violates those peoples’ human rights.

Dance performed by tribal people based on their customs and beliefs. Tribal dance evolved through the experience of the aborigines. They had to fight ferocious beasts of the jungle and hunt animals and birds for their survival and existence. Before going out for a hunt, hunters would draw pictures of their prey and dance in a body, imitating a hunt.

People danced to placate or defeat evil spirits, to prevent decay and diseases, to cause rainfall for production of crops, or to prevent drought or famine. With the evolution of society, human activities have undergone many changes resulting in differences in dance styles. Different tribes like Manupuris, Santals, Oraons, Murongs, Chakmas, Garos,

Khasias, Kochas, Hajongs etc, live in the plain land and hilly regions of Bangladesh. Although some changes have taken place in the livelihood, religious beliefs and lifestyles of some of these tribes, there has been no radical change in their way of life. Even today collecting fruits and roots from the jungle, hunting and jhum cultivation continue to be the main sources of their livelihood and they still tend to follow their ancestors in their various religious and cultural festivals.

Most tribes perform in dances, songs and music on religious festivals, births, deaths, marriage ceremonies, and other festivities. They perform dances individually or collectively, in traditional dresses, along with their own songs. They make their own musical instruments. Their dances are named after their tribes, eg Santal dance, Garo dance, Manupuri dance etc. They perform dances not only on the occasion of construction of houses, cultivation and fishing, but also to celebrate the creation of man. They perform dances desiring rainfall in time of drought, beseeching divine influence then. The Khasias say "The better the dance, the better the crop." Musical instruments such as the drum, madal (a kind of tom-tom) and flute are generally used as accompaniment.

The bamboo-dance of the Chakmas is very popular. Locally it is known as Cheralam. In this dance two groups of men or women hold two bamboos on each side of the group of dancers. They create a rhythmic sound by striking pairs of bamboos. The dancers hop in the spaces between the two bamboos in rhythmic unison, taking care to jump before the bamboos clash. Unless the dancers are very nimble, they stand to get badly hurt. There are most important differences between cultural evolution and genetic evolution. It is that cultural evolution can often decide whether to accept and follow the way their parents behave or not to inherit certain genes. When most of the individuals change their behavior and beliefs, we say that the culture has changed. This is why; cultural change has the possibility to occur much more rapidly than genetic change. Nevertheless, culture is always changing. Because, culture consists of learned patterns of behavior and belief, cultural traits can be unlearned and learned a new one, as human needs are changeable.

4.2 Dance of Garo and Evolution

Once a nomadic tribe of the Bodo group of Mongoloids now living in different areas of Bangladesh and in the adjacent states of India. Their faces are round, hair and eyes black, foreheads extended to eye area, eyebrows deep, eyes small, noses flat and jaws high. Beards rarely grow on their cheeks and they almost have no hair on their body. Garos are short but usually have stout bodies with wide chests and bulky arms, legs and muscles. Their skin is yellowish and smooth. Garos are said to have an ancestral relationship with China. There are some similarities between the Chinese and Garos in language as well as folk culture. According to some anthropologists, Garos descended from the northeast bank of Koknar Lake of the northwestern Chinese province of Chinghai about 3-5 thousand years ago and were first settled in Tura province of Tibet and in Nakalbari area of Bhutan.

But being forced to quit these areas, they moved to different places of Cooch Bihar and Assam and to Rangamati area of Rangpur in Bengal. Goal Para, the abode of the Garos in Rangpur, had communication facilities that connected it with Assam during British rule. Due to internal conflicts, a group of Garos had to leave the place and started settling in the inaccessible forest areas of the Garo hills, and the tribe permanently got the name

Garos. The Garo hills cover an area of 3,000 square miles. In the past, the territory was a part of Bengal but British rulers had included it in Assam.

The natural habitats of the Garo people are the hills, hillocks, deep forests and places near fountains, springs, and other water bodies. Animals, reptiles and birds are their closest neighbours and animals that they come in contact with include rhinoceros, tigers, elephants, wild buffaloes, goyals (wild cow), dogs, deer, porcupines and rabbits. Their main professions are jhum cultivation in the slopes of the hills, livestock farming and hunting. Handicrafts and the cottage industries are recent additions to their profession. Mirza Nathan, a Mughal army commander, remarked that Garos eat everything except iron. There is some exaggeration in this statement but in fact, they eat all animals except cats, which is their totem. They live in an isolated world and within their own geographic, economic and cultural boundaries and follow their own customary norms. They do not have any king but are ruled by the tribal chief.

In the past, Garos used to put on barks of trees. The common dress of modern day Garo males is jana or nengti (a narrow piece of cloth around the waist), although the Garo people of a relatively higher status wear short skirts woven by themselves. The women cover their breasts by knotting a piece of short cloth on their backs. The males also wear gamcha or dhuti and many women put on saris, shirts and trousers. Garos burn the barks of banana trunks and use their ashes for making soap and salt. Many also use the ashes as a special ingredient in making food. Fruits comprise the staple food of Garos and therefore, they hardly suffered from any shortage in food supply in the past. This contributed to their fast growth. Garos cook their food in bamboo pipes. They drink plenty of wine and entertain guests invariably with meat. On festive occasions, guests bring cocks or pigs while visiting someone's house.

Annoyed with the difficulties of living in the hills, many Garos have abandoned their houses there and started to live in forest zones in downhill areas. These Garos are known as *Lamdani*. Garos continuing to live in the hills call themselves the *Achchik* and to the *Achchiks* *Lamdanis* are the *Mindaya*, a name derived from the Chinese word *mandai*, which means man. The *Achchiks* do not like *Lamdanis*. Garos live mainly in areas under old Mymensingh district and in its bordering areas of the Indian State of Meghalaya. Gradually, they have spread to Nalitabbari, Kalmakanda, Durgapur, Sreebardi, Barhatta, Dhobaura, Haluaghat, Purbadhala, Phulpur, Fulbaria, Bhaluka, Madhupur and other places of Mymensingh, Netrokona, Sherpur and Tangail districts. Many Garos left Bhaluka after the erosion of the hills and the extinction of forests. Some Garos live in Sunamganj of Sylhet, Sreepur and Kawraid of Gazipur and Raumari of Kurigram. Many Garos, once living in the Bangladesh territory, migrated to the Indian State of Meghalaya. A significant number did so during the war of liberation.

Garos historically did not own land. Whatever land they hold in possession, they do so without any ownership documents. They also do not pay rents for land. In the beginning of this century, the density of Garo population in the areas bordering with India was 44 persons per square mile. The pressure on land in the areas around Garo habitats has increased manifold with increase in population, especially because the jhum cultivation, which they practice, requires large land areas. A sample survey of 1979 concluded that in Bangladesh, 20% of Garos do not possess any land, 30% have only homestead land, 30% work as hired laborers and 20% cultivate mortgaged land.

Traditionally, Garo community had no social classes but the British introduced a feudal system amongst them based on land ownership. The British also introduced the notion of business in the Garo society. The British replaced the barter system of exchange that they had with transactions through money. Christian missionaries converted Garos into Christians and those who accepted the new religion were given blocks of land areas with ownership, while in the past, the land belonged to the tribe as a collective property and was cultivated under a cooperative system.



(Picture: 22 Traditional Dance of Garo)

Garos are very conservative in their outlook. In the first hundred years of their campaign, Christian missionaries found them very reluctant in accepting the new religion. Later, the missionary process was geared up and according to a survey conducted in late 1970s, about 80% of the Garos of Bangladesh have become Christians. At present, almost all Garos are Christians and only a few are Muslims. One of the major reasons why Garos have adopted christianity is their immediate economic gain in the form of direct financial assistance offered to the newly baptised Christians. However, Garos have retained their traditional culture and customs even after being converted into Christians.

Besides traditional beliefs, Garos follow their own religion Sangshareq, which has roots in agriculture. They are not concerned about worshipping idols and do not bother about sin and virtue, gods and goddesses and heaven and hell. They observe thirteen or more brata (vows) and festivals in a year and pray for the fertility of the soil, safety of the harvests and protection from evil spirits, diseases and epidemics. The *Sangsharek* religion has elements of *mantra-tantra* and magic. Garos are animists and believe in dual existence of matters. They ascribe life to nature and inanimate objects and consider snakes and tigers as personised forms of dead souls. According to their belief, some men remain men at daytime, but become tigers at night. Garos name such men the *Matsadu Matsabed*. They believe that some trees, stones and hills are the abodes of the spirits and therefore, it is better to keep away from them. Among Garos, the people who arrange festivals, organise vows, and treat and cure patients by folk medicines are persons with supernatural power and therefore, enjoy respect and honour in the community. These persons are named *khamal or kamal*. Garos do not give their children any sweet names because, they believe, such names may attract evil spirits and cause harm to them.

When someone dies, Garos sacrifice animals, offer food to the guests and observe different vows before and after the funeral rituals, so that the soul of the dead person cannot do them any harm. In the past, Garos captured people from the plains and burnt them with the body of the dead person as sacrifice. They believe that the soul of a dead man stays for some time at *Chick Sung*, the highest peak of the Aro mountain. Then it moves round unknown places of the vast world and at last, returns back as a spirit or gets rebirth as a human being or animal. People who commit suicide or are killed by a ferocious animal are reborn as animals. Their funeral ceremonies are observed in prolonged rituals, of which *mimangkham* is the most important. In that ritual, the dead body is bathed and then thoroughly anointed with oil by a woman while other women sing traditional wailing songs. Then the men wrap it in a cloth sheet. People attending the ceremony pray for the departed soul and offer gifts. The body is then shifted to the funeral pyre and while still in fire, a piece of half burnt bone is collected for burial in the house, where the deceased had lived. The spot is called *khatik*. A portion of the ashes collected from the pyre is spread in the field. For seven days after death, members of the family take only vegetables and offer food to the dead person. Then they celebrate *shraddha* with rice, chicken and hem. In the evening of the day of *shraddha*, they hold a mourning procession. The last offering of food to the dead is marked by a feast with plenty of wine the celebrations include dances, songs, and rhythmic beating of drums.

The moon, sun, rain, rivers and crops are like gods to Garos. In the Bangla month of *Chaitra*, Garos clear jungles, burn woods and leaves to ashes, and sow paddy. Then they observe *Asiroka* (the New Year festival) and pray for safety and security throughout the year. They believe that evil spirits may steal away ripe and harvested crops from the field and storehouses. To protect themselves against spirits, they perform religious rituals in the form of festivals under different names while sowing seeds and harvesting crops. The largest among these festivals is the *Wangala*. This is celebrated in the whole Garo area in full fanfare. Adults drink homemade wine, young boys and girls wear specially designed dresses, colour their skin and sing and dance wildly. They also entertain each other with drinks and in their celebrations, chose their husbands or wives. The musical instruments used in the festival include buffalo horns and drums of different size. Strong and young boys dance vigorously with shields and swords in hands to frighten evil spirits.



(Picture 23: Traditional Watch home of Garo)

These performances are part of the *SangshareK* religion and aim at neutralising spirits, ghosts, and demons in two ways, by offering rogala (oblation) to them and by frightening them.

According to a Garo legend, a woman named *Nantanupanta* created the earth from a handful of soil taken from the unfathomable bottoms of the sea. The version is well accepted in the Garo community. Garos are matriarchal. Husbands live in the houses of wives and are engaged in household work. The mother is the owner of all the property of a household. After her death, the youngest daughter or any daughter nominated by the mother becomes the heir and is called *Nakma*. The wife of a husband acquires ownership of the assets earned by him. The children are also treated as assets and are owned by the mother. They are known after the family of their mother. The mother is responsible for rearing the children. After the death of the wife, the husband has no moral right to stay in that house. However, the custom is rarely applied in practice. Daughters are more cared and loved in a family because the sons are to leave the home after marriage and are not treated well in the family if they do not marry in time. They wail at the time of leaving the home and in their new residence, they remain down-hearted in the initial days. The wife consoles him by love and care. Often, a newly married husband runs away, but is caught and brought back. Because the husbands do not own property, they care little about the family. But their wives scold them and sometimes even threaten them by the warning that they will be driven out of the house.

The rate of literacy in the Garo community is higher among the women than among the men. The reason is the matriarchal system. This makes it difficult for a girl to find a

husband with equal standing. While in work or in movement, mothers hold their babies on their backs with a piece of cloth. In the Garo community, marriage within the same clan is not allowed since the boys and girls of a clan are considered as brothers and sisters. The Garo tribe is divided into ten clans. In case someone violates the principle of not marrying within the clan, he is deprived of all property rights and ousted from the village. On many occasions, if a young man of a suitable clan is liked by a girl, he is forcibly made to marry her. The clan of the bridegroom does not oppose the match.

Polygamy is not forbidden in the Garo community. After the death of the husband, the wife can claim anybody without a wife in the husband's clan to become her new husband. In such a marriage, the bride and the bridegroom may often not match in age. After the death of the husband, a woman can have her son-in-law as her own husband, too and the daughter and the mother may live peacefully as co-wives. If, on consideration of any special situation in a clan, someone marries a minor girl, he can have sexual relationship with his mother-in-law during the period until his wife attains maturity. In the past, there was a practice of group marriage and free sex in Garo society. Now, however, extramarital sexual relationship in Garo society is seen as a crime and is liable to punishment. In case of any such event, the khamal (informal clan leader) identifies the criminal through some complex tests. The punishment for adultery is confiscation of property.

The Garo language is called *Achchik Katha* (spoken language of the hill people). It does not have any alphabet. It is rich in proverbs, legends, rhymes and folk tales. The Garo songs are similar in melody to Bangla folk songs. Garos dance and sing in groups and have their own musical instruments. Garo dances and songs are very similar to those of the Malaysian hill tribe Orang Achlis. Like the Mymensingh ballads, the Garo language has narrative operas. According to a Garo legend, they had their scriptures written on rhinoceros skin. These scripts were lost during a journey. While hunting, a zamindar of Mymensingh found a few torn pages of the manuscript in a cave of the Garo hills and published them in the newspaper Saurav. But the reproduction was hazy and the words illegible. Outwardly, they look like the Chinese pictogram. Garos speak in both Garo and Bangla. Christian missionaries tried to introduce Roman letters into the Garo language, but the effort proved unsuccessful. However, the Garo language can now easily be written in Bangla alphabet. Many Garos perform Bangla dances very well and are good at singing Bangla songs.

Garos have their own sports and games. They build houses on elevated platforms and decorate the *jadaps* (rooms) with the horns of buffalos and deer. In the past, they used to decorate the houses with human skulls also. These skulls were of men attacked and slain in the plains and were symbols of power, aristocracy and heroism. Garos also traded in human skulls. Garo houses have separate cowsheds and granaries. Almost every big Garo village has a big decorated house or *nakpanthe* at its centre. This is used for residence and recreation of the young men of the village. However, girls are not allowed to enter the house.

According to the estimates of the Birisiri Cultural Academy, the number of Garos in Bangladesh was more than 100,000 in the 1990s. Of them, about 40,000 lived in the Mymensingh region. Garos do not practice family planning and the reproduction rate among them is higher than the national average. Thanks to the efforts of Christian missionaries, the rate of literacy among the Garos is also higher than the national average.

But only a very small number of them acquire higher education. Some educated Garo women work as expert nurses in different hospitals at home and abroad. Some young men and women work in junior positions in Christian NGOs. Some of them teach in educational institutions in the Garo region. The social system, tastes, behaviour and dress of Garos are now undergoing changes as a result of their constant interaction with the people of the plains. However, the women of this matriarchal tribe are not in favour of accepting these changes.

5.3 Impact of Culture on Garo society

According to O'Neil Dennis all cultures change through time. No culture is static. It is now clear that cultural change is very complex. When analyzing the transformation of a culture, it has far-ranging causes and effects (O'Neil Dennis: 1997). Following the research findings, it is obvious that Garos' overall lifestyle and culture are changing with the influence of some internal and external forces. While the Garo society is changing then they are discarding many things from their old culture and adapting new traits from other cultures. It is evident that there are many factors responsible for Garos cultural changes such as Christianity, formal education, government policy, integration with the modernised system and economy, modern agricultural equipment, occupational diversification, Bengali settlement, changes in livelihood, economic insecurity, migration to the city, work and income, infrastructural development, roads and highways, influence of national culture, influence of the media, TV, radio, film etc. Here modernization is a complex process, which is influencing many other factors and somehow changing the traditional setting to a new setting.

Almost all the Garos are now Christian. Christianity has influenced and changed the Garos a lot. Christian Missionaries and Churches were established in the Garo living areas long ago and supported the Garo people in many ways. Christian missionaries' introduction of schools, hospitals, rice banks and finally Garos' conversion to Christianity has directly influenced their culture. But nobody can tell exactly from when the Garos started to transform themselves into Christian. Although the first missionary was established in the Garo area was a Baptist Church in Birisiri in 1892, it was followed by the Catholics who founded their first Church in 1912, only a few miles away from the Birisiri. Eventually, the Catholic Church became the biggest Church among the Garo in Bangladesh (67 percent) and Baptist (29 percent) (Bal Ellen: 1999). The villagers told me that after converted to Christianity they believe in one God and also 'the God has created the world, Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden are their ancestors. Although Garos were used to believe in Me'mang, they can still name and somehow they practice many Sangsharak rites and make their offerings as well. Here an important contradictory behavior is Mansa puja, which they perform if the patient recovered. Christianity does not allow all these practices. The villagers told me Christianity insisted them for new beliefs that separate them from the *Shngsharak* beliefs and practices. Sometimes traditional dances are also seen here as being incompatible with Christianity. In most Baptist Churches, the Garo musical instruments are banned as well. But people explained that the young boy plays Garo drums in the Church and sometime even inside the Catholic Church.

According to the villagers, Catholics could drink Garo *Chu* but the Baptists are forbidden from taking any drink. It was a strike on the older custom as *Shngsharek* needs *Chu* for

their sacrifices and they use it in all their festivals. Like all these forbiddances; in Christianity still there are many contradictions with Garos beliefs and practices. In Garos, Christian missionaries came with western values and tried to modify Garos way of life, including their marriage, inheritance and even their individual naming system. Now they do not practice their old marriage system, such as bridegroom capturing and others. Seemingly, they no longer observed the old marriage ceremonies, whereas Christian laws of marriage substitute them. In the matrilineal Garo community, according to their inheritance system, only women inherit property, but nowadays there are many instances of transferring land to their sons. Like this, in other aspects of Garo life, recently men are playing much more vital role which has weakened the traditional Garos matrilineal system. In my research area Pirgacha, Modhupur almost all the Garos have been converted to Christianity and there is a Church and missionary high school, which is directly influencing Garos social and spiritual life. In addition to modernization and globalization, according to Shashi (1994) Christianity has changed the spiritual life of the Garos and placed them in a world of modernity. It has also sapped their traditional culture, thus loosening the convert's mental and social roots (quoted from K.A.N. Chowdhury: 2007).

According to the villagers, Christian missionaries have worked for Garos' economic uplift, once they were very poor and suffering from indebtedness to the moneylenders. In this situation, in many places missionaries have arranged cash loans for the Garos, which helped them towards self-reliance and helped them to refrain from resorting to moneylenders. According to Bal Ellen 'Christianity provides Garos' with an important identity marker, it has a major impact on their socio-economic, psychological, cultural, and political situation; it influences their outlook on life and on the world, provides them with a sense of belonging to world that extends far beyond the borders of Bangladesh, offers new educational and professional opportunities, and regulates relationship with their society and with others' (Bal Ellen: 2000). Finally, Garo cultures have changed a lot under the influence of Christian missionaries but there are some other views on the influence of Christianity. According to K.A.N. Chowdhury, it is probably more due to Christianity that they are able to maintain their separate identity in a society predominated by Muslims in Bangladesh. It is because of the fact that Christianity has provided them a sense of belonging to a world at the same time allowed them to remain distinctively Garo' (K.A.N. Chowdhury: 2007). Although it is not my major concern here, but since Christianity has brought a lot of changes to Garos, I asked one old respondent who had been converted to Christianity at his early age; 'Why have you been converted to Christianity?' He replied that like others he has been converted with the help of Christian missionaries to become modern and to articulate him into a greater Christian society. According to Banglapedia, one of the major reasons why Garos have adopted Christianity is their immediate economic gain in the form of direct financial assistance offered to the newly baptised Christians. Christian missionaries converted Garos in to Christians and those who accepted the new religion were given blocks of land areas with ownership (Banglapedia: 2006).

Urbanization is a process, which automatically influences different aspects of human life Including social, economic and cultural life. To some extent urbanization is breaking their household-based economy and kin system. Many Garo villagers use mobile phones to communicate with others and read newspapers regularly. While doing my field investigation, I have noticed that dependence on agriculture has decreased, although still today Garos' main source of income comes from agriculture. In the cities, the majority of

Garos get jobs as maids, cooks, gardeners, guards, and drivers, but it is surprising that many Garo girls from Pirgacha are employed in the beauty parlors in Tangail and Dhaka city. Some of the girls are working as a maidservant in Bengali and in foreigners' houses in Dhaka city, and many other men are working as guards, drivers and workers in offices. Many villagers have the idea that if their children can go to Dhaka city then they can get a job and would be able to support their family financially. According to S. Drong, among the expatriate community of Dhaka, especially in the diplomatic areas of Baridhara, Bonani and Gulshan, Garos have a good reputation for being educated (often knowing some English), hard working, and honest. Foreigners are known for paying their workers well, so these jobs are considered good opportunities (S.Drong:2004). Garos generally live in certain areas of Dhaka city, such as Badda, Cocacola, Kamlapur, and Mohammadpur. These Garos have some place to meet and interact with each other there in the city. According to Robbin Burling a number of universities have Garo clubs, events, and magazines created by Garo students in order to meet each other and unite (Robin Burling: 1997). The *Nokmandi* community center in Farmgate is the most popular of them, which has hostel, bank system for the Garos and also organize cultural programs for them. Besides, there exist Garo movements within Dhaka to keep the culture alive. There are other views as well, according to some respondents; some of the city living second generation is not much concerned with their roots and culture. Being a Garo means to them some differences regarding food, cloth, inheritance, dialect and so on. These types of changes in lifestyles and in thinking are inviting greater changes in their traditional pattern of life. In the early days, Garos physical mobility was limited, but now they are much more accessible to the larger society. Here I have noticed, comparatively female Garos have much more mobility than the Bengali women. According to Robbin Burling, Garo women are more independent and there is no restriction on their movement. While ideas of purity and pollution have serious impact upon Bengali culture, Garos are not barred by such social prohibition. They are always free not only to move about their own villages, but to travel to other villages as well (Robbin Burling: 1997).

According to Professor Trond Thuen, cultural changes are brought about by numerous Processes of modernization during which the continuity of distinctive cultural repertoires has been partly broken (Trond Thuen: 1995). It is general that all over the world, old traditional cultural practices are mostly disappearing, whereas the modern and majority cultures are becoming stronger; this is also going on in the Garo society. In fact with the contact with the modern society and the majority culture, the traditional culture of the Garos is changing and they are adopting many traits from other cultures.

Electricity, which is a benchmark for modern life, is introduced in the village Pirgacha some years ago. Almost all the houses have electricity unless the family is too poor to afford it. People reported that, it was a great thing for them when electricity first came to their place; many Garo families bought television, VCR, cassette player and so no. In television, usually they watch Bangladesh Television (BTV) but sometimes with the support of antenna they watch Indian channels, English channels and others. People now move around less in their spare time, they rather enjoy watch television. Indirectly, this culture is prohibiting Garos usual social mixing by inspiring people living themselves into their houses. According to my observation through this small screen (TV) global culture is revealed to the Garo community.

During field work, it is observed; Garos are now using various modern methods of cultivation, which has directly and indirectly influenced their traditional method of

cultivation as well as has influenced their traditional culture and lifestyle. Once they were used with Jhum cultivation and then gradually they moved for wet rice in the method of plough cultivation. At present they are using machinery plough and introduced with various types of rice farming and using modern pesticides and chemical fertilizers. For using these modern inputs in farming, they have achieved some modern skills and professional knowledge. According to Majumder, this type of modern method of cultivation has reduced traditional divisions of labour between male and female in the family and finally has changed a lot. (Majumder, 1985, quoted from K.A.N. Chowdhury) 2007) In Jhum cultivation, women were directly involved and associated with farming but plough cultivation has reduced the women's activities in the household and domestic arena. Modern inputs into agriculture have brought economic well-being which is enabling them to enjoy other modern facilities. In my research villages, I have seen that there are some power tillers which are used by the Garo farmers.

For any illnesses, Garo used to use their traditional healing methods, which are hundreds of years old. Nowadays, the modern medicine has replaced that traditional knowledge. Traditional knowledge is closely connected with people's personal experiences, which have best been preserved by way of using the environment. Like Garos, indigenous peoples' modernization is eradicating traditional knowledge and skills of other indigenous people of the world. While talking about *Sami* people of Norway, Nils Jernsletten mentioned that in the *Sami* people modern reindeer herding, fishing, and traveling represent a relatively new development.

In these circumstances the Garo, which was a self-sufficient isolable whole with a distinct social structure and culture, are now changing a lot. Finally, Garos are becoming more and more exposed to modern culture and the lifestyle of the neighboring Bengali society. They seem to have lost their traditional matriarchal system, clan organization, family as well their traditional religion. Finally, their traditional social structure and communal economy are breaking down for socio-economic mobility and diversification towards a hierarchically differentiated modern society.

Although it is not much of my concern here, but I asked my informants 'How their culture would be preserved from possible endangerment?' They eagerly answered and mentioned that to preserve the Garos' own being we need-government patronization, Garos' consciousness and willingness to preserve their culture, control over their resources, self-determination, revival of their political organizations, necessary support services, written form of their language, education in their own language, media facilities, research works, support by the civil society and others. Here, two things they mentioned importantly which are; firstly they want their constitutional recognition and secondly they want a separate Ministry for the plain land indigenous people of greater Mymensingh, Sirajgonj, Dinajpur, Rangpur like what we have for the indigenous people of Chittagong Hill Tracts. While I was asking them about Garos cultural preservation, I guess the Garos did not open up much more as I am a member of the society at large.

5.4 Past and present Dance among Garo:

There is a distinction between life in the rural areas and in the urban areas. The acceleration of development work in recent years, particularly after 1950, has contributed greatly to the material progress of the people everywhere, though the impact has naturally been greater in the town areas. The rapid spread of education has inevitably brought about a change in the vocational pattern, with many young people turning away from agriculture and taking up other types of work, either with Government or in business undertakings. The trend is bound to have an effect on village cohesion in the foreseeable future.

In short, the Garos today face the same challenges that tribal communities elsewhere have to face, but in spite of the rapid shift of influence to the urban elite, the backbone of the tribe is still the rural population and many of the rural folk are shrewd enough to appreciate what is best for them. This fact may help to balance the swing from one extreme to another – from a generally conservative form of society to an ultra-modern one.

Though the main feature of their traditional political setup, social institutions, and marriage systems, inheritance of properties, religion and beliefs are common, it is observed that as these units were isolated from one another; they have developed their own separate patterns. They also speak different dialects. Also their traditional songs, dances, music differ from each other. The song, dances and music are mostly associated with traditional religious functions and ceremonies.

Group songs may include *Kudare sala, Hoa ring-a, Injoka, Kore doka, Ajea, Doroa, Nanggorere goserong, Dim dim chong dading chong, Serejing, Boel sala etc.* Dance forms are *Ajema Roa, Mi Su-a, Chambil Moa, Do-kru Sua, Chame mikkang nia, Kambe Toa, Gaewang Roa, Napseprika* and many others. They had two types of dancing with the connection at funeral ceremonies and at any joyful occasion where men and women were used to dance together and sometimes separately. Nowadays they have almost nothing to perform according to their former religion and customary practices except a few of joyful occasions. They make various ‘shaped’ or modified and mixed performances according to their habitual ways of life and to the Christianity. Christianity and evangelic Christianity is being found in the effective role of changing the Garos to the ‘modern’ world habitation but the Garos have something rest in their habitual way of life. Neither their group boundaries nor the Garo identities have been changed perfectly. Here, religion may be a great factor of massive cultural change but not as equal to the technique of technology based religion centered education and training for conversion.

I have insighted their spiritual belongings renewed into a ‘mixed’ or ‘shaped’ performances to maintain their group identities but into a new religious identity is considered by them as a development in a degree. These are necessitating into them with various processes which are integrating them into wider societies with a new identity. Here, it has been arisen the question of concealing their former identity inter-owned from ‘*Shangsharism*’ encompassing their whole culture i.e. way of life. The clash between the reserving of former customs, traditions, practices into a modified behavioral meanings and the different or perfectly changed into a new identity of modern Garo in Birisiri. But the Garos don’t think without their ancestral group identity and not to be remained in

their ignorant lives. In that respect, they are changing as usual ways of surrounding lives as their means of production has not been changed drastically equalizing to their neighboring mainstream societies. Here, evangelism or evangelic Christianity or Christianizing help them to reach to the destination of acquiring newly created aspects of 'modern' reality or the meanings of 'modern' life style. These processes are also going on or were going on into different similar groups by Hinduaizing, Islamizing and Budhaizing along with modernizing processes to the wider or mainstream societies. But when they are fear about their Garo identities to the identity of Christian Garo that make them into a great conflict of 'civilizations'. Various aspects have come out before of them as Bengali culture Assamese culture, Bangladeshi recognition, Hindu culture, Muslim culture and Christian culture etc and their own Garo culture.

CHAPTER 06:

STUDY FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS:

The study has attempted to analyze the present situation of the Garo in this chapter on the basis of primary data. In this context the chapter dealt with the socio demographic setting and the changing pattern of dances and its dynamics to bring them within the mainstream or elsewhere of others in the world. It has analyzed with the aforesaid objectives of the study and to give directions of traditional matrilineal society by pressure of multidimensional forces to upheaval Garo community from tradition to modern. However it is under pressure to change their way of life means to acculturation process has gone and change to distinctiveness and other traditional features made them a global attitude as well a transformational domain for further formulating diversity of study.

5.1: Socio demographic Settings

The study has collected data from two villages; one is *Utrail* and another is *Kanail*. Out of 48 respondents, 9 from *Utrail* and the remaining from *Kanail* village have taken under investigation as sample. The nominal and interval scale have used to analyze the collected data of the present study.

Table 1: Sex of the respondents

Gender	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	12	25
Female	36	75
Total	48	100

The study explored that among the total 48 respondents, 25% are male and 75% are female. The female respondents are higher than male which indicates that the Garo till predominate by matrilineal system.

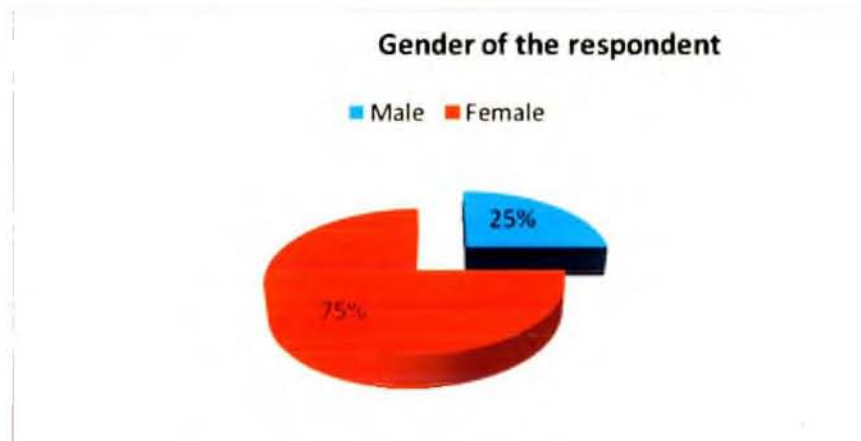


Figure 1: Gender of the respondents

Table 2: Age of the respondents

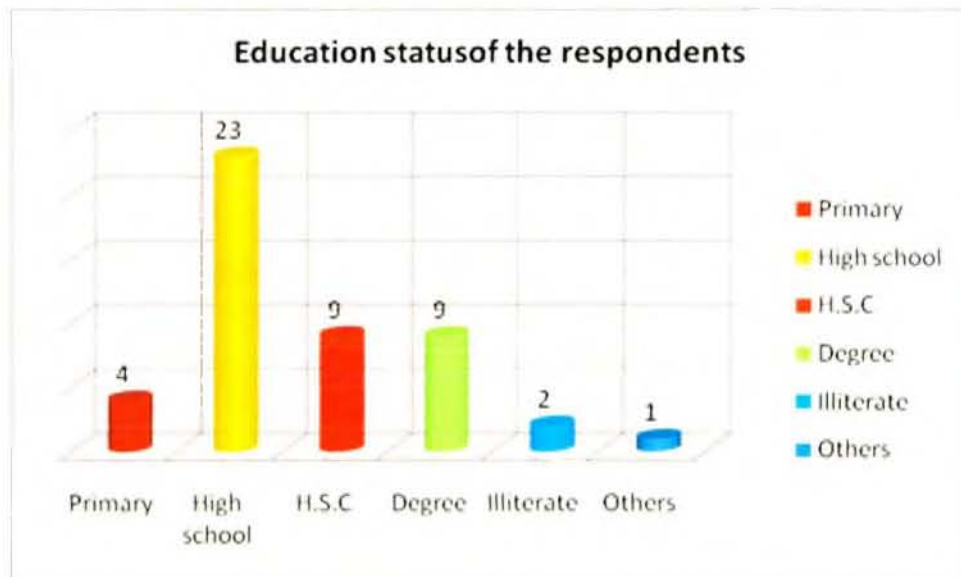
Age	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
16-30	26	54.17
31-45	11	22.92
46-60	9	18.75
61-75	2	4.17
Total	48	100

The study showed in table 2 that among the total 48 respondents, 54.17% respondent's age were 16-30years, followed by 22.92% respondent's age were 31-45years, 18.75% respondent's age were 46-60years and 4.175% respondent's age were 61-75years. Demographically the age indicates that only 4.17% respondents are dependent on their family.

Table 3: Educational status of the respondents

Level of education	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Primary	4	8.33
High school	23	47.92
H.S.C	9	18.75
Degree	9	18.75
Illiterate	2	4.17
Others	1	2.08
Total	48	100

The educational status of the respondents showed that 8% respondents have completed primary education, 47.92% respondents have completed high school level education, 18.75% respondents have completed H.S.C, 18.75% respondents have passed degree, and whereas 4.17% respondents have no education and 2.08% belongs to others. The rate of literacy is higher than others ethnic community as well as society at large.



(Figure 02: Education Status of the Respondents)

Table 4: Clan of the respondents

Name of the clan	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Marak	34	70.83
Sangma	14	29.17
Total	48	100

Among the total 48 respondents, 70.83% respondent's belongs to Marak clan and 29.17% respondent's belongs to Sangma clan. The main clan of the Garo is consists as *Sangma, Marak, Momin Sira and Areng*. However this clan has consisted of different subclan or Machang (Islam: 1986). But the present study observed that these two villages dominated by *Marak and Sangma* clan which is compare to other study as same (Ibid: 1986).

Table 5: Religious status of the respondents

Religion	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Sangsarek	03	6.25
Christian	45	93.75
Hindu	00	00
Others	00	00
Total	48	100

Religious status of the respondents suggests that 6.25% respondent's religion is traditional *Sangsarek* and 93.75 % respondent's religion Christian. The impact of christinaty has created adverse effect on their beliefs, ritual, and traditional *Sangsarek*. At present they don't celebrate any religious festival and socio-cultural activity to *sangsarek*. Now a day they are practicing festivals of Christian religion and related with other cultural program.

Table 6: Marital status of the respondents

Marital status	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Married	23	47.92
Unmarried	22	45.84
Widow	03	6.25
Total	48	100

Marital status of the respondents suggests that 47.92% respondents are married, 45.84% respondents are unmarried and 6.25% respondents are widow.

Table 7: Number of the family members of the respondents

Number of Members	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
01-03	02	4.17
04-06	11	22.92
07-09	35	72.91
Total	48	100

Among the total 48 respondents, 4.17% respondent's family members are 01-03, 22.92% respondent's family members are 04-06 and 72.91% respondent's family members are 07-09. The data shows that the villages under study are predominantely by joint or extended family. As a result to compare with other Garo village as well as rational level in Bangladesh nuclear family is much higher than other types of family. But the family

size of number is 7 to 9 members consists 72.9% which is in concordance with their traditional system of family structure

5.2 Changing pattern of Dances and its Dynamics:

The present study has observed and participated on dance of Garo's as its dynamics to changes traditional pattern to modern. The Garo community has influenced by the exposer of mass media, communication, society at large and globalization. In this view indigenous dances have changed and emerged multiplicity of collateral and the arts of poetry, music and dance. Anthropological speaking that Garos are transformed and accuired as well as adopted to multidimensional knowledge of dances such as Bengali, English and Hindi dances. In fact they know the use of modern instruments of song and dance. In this context, the study has assesed changes of dances among said community and reflected on the objectives. All family members of the respondents are knowngig dance.

Table 8: Type of dance

Type	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Garo	2	4.17
Bengali and Garo	46	95.83
Total	48	100

Among the total 48 respondents, 4.17% respondents do only Garo dance and 95.83% respondents do both Garo and Bengali dance. It indicates that all respondents as well households integrated and adapted to knowing Bengali dance and song culture. As a result of the life experiences of all emotion association common to all and its increasing complexity reflects the increasing elaboration of social life of Garo.

Table 9: Traditional dance equipments

Type	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	47	97.02
No	01	2.08
Total	48	100

Among the total 48 respondents, 97.02% respondents said that they have traditional dance equipments and only 2.08% respondents said that they had no traditional dance equipments. It is true fact Garo households has maintained and preserved their traditional instruments as a name of cultural heritage. But another question of instrument related to lost and asked everything everybody to agree their cultural instrument has lost day by day. Even present generation of the Garo has not to be identified and mentioned the name of instruments due to exposure of new emerging process of material culture.

Table 10: Factors of Changes

Indicators	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Dance instruments	48	100
Watching Television	48	100
Listen Radio	48	100
Impact on Bengali culture	48	100

Interestingly all of them are enjoying television or radio. Due to extended exposer all ethnic community of Bangladesh under pressure of changing pateren of dance, Garo is

not an exception to isolation and distinct from that changes. Everyone has agreed to impact on Bengali culture, it indicates they are assimilated with society at large.

Table 11: Learning to do dance

From where	Numbers of the respondents	Percentage (%)
Seeing	41	85.42
Cultural centre	05	10.42
others	02	4.17
Total	48	100

Among the total 48 respondents, 85.42% respondents have learned their traditional dance by seeing and, 10.42% respondents have learned from cultural centre and 4.17% respondents have learned from others. From traditional anthropological perspectives, data stated that their traditional dance acquired from society and family which is continuing generation to generation and till dominated.

The impact of various factors which is changing pattern of their culture especially in indigenous dances among the Garo in Bangladesh or elsewhere in the world. The respondents of the present study has agreed and understood to change their traditional or indigenous dance. They mentioned in response to cultural heritage of them are losing due impact of urbanization, industrialization, Context with main term and globalization.

At present the study found that all respondents are following and interested to Bengali dance. Almost have known the dance of Bengali and perform it. Regarding these respondents asked in table no. 12, 87% performed dance of Bengali and 13% not perform of the same.

Table 12: Performance of Bengali Dance

Performance	No of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	42	87
No	6	13
Total	48	100

The study area has established cultural center by the government which is known as 'small ethnic cultural center'. This center has played important role to maintain and preserve traditional or indigenous dances of Bangladesh. As a result, these ethnic communities are living there including Garo, performed, learned and participated in various occasions. During fieldwork, I performed to participate with them as well as observe to understand their cultural life. However, among Garos dance has not related with religion as well as they don't have sexual discrimination at any level of indigenous dances. It means that the Garo community dances are not in differences by gender. In fact, the Garo traditional dances are related with the social and festival magico-religion since long time. Till today, they are observing and arranging it to enjoyfull life which is becoming a cultural whole from others and society at large. In the age of globalization, Garos are not exception to integrated, assimilated with others when they needed to adopt. Therefore, the Garo traditional society has transformed into more complex rather than simple one.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Bangladesh is a traditional bond society. The diversity and pluralism is one of the most significant features of the country. Almost identified by the anthropologists is 54 ethnic communities have made us enrich cultural dynamics in the world. Art of dance of different ethnic groups give a full of the same spontaneous freedom and natural grace. The present study has endeavored the indigenous dance in particular with the ethnic community Garo in Bangladesh. Dance is a part of way of life which transform from primitive to till today in the process of evolution in Bangladesh as well as in the World. This process of evolution is under pressure of various internal and external factors, such as urbanization, industrialization, modernization, and globalization. The impact of all factors have made a sandwich of all ethnic community in Bangladesh particularly under study of Garo's. It is not an exaggeration to say that Garo ethnic community under turmoil with their holistic way of life. Therefore the present study has conducted and raised the question of process of changing pattern of Garo dance which was made the 'traditional cum isolable whole' from others ethnics and society at large. We know very well that print and electronic media are the best agents of preserving and upholding our local, indigenous culture as well as practising of multicultural and pluralistic attitude in our country. Media personnel should be more sensitive and cognisant of upholding the harmonious relationship among different ethno religious people in Bangladesh as well as elsewhere in the world (Mahbub: 14th April, 2013).

The study has followed the method and techniques of data collection from field by participant observation and through semi structured questionnaire. In fact the researcher a professional dancer has attempted to rehearsal, observation and performances in dance to well understanding and reliability performative aspect of culture among Garo in Bangladesh. The study has used camera, note book, for made substantial contextual knowledge including how to dance in what costume, in what style, with whom and when. In the field I address myself as dancer then they took very close as a person of insider of the community. During field work of the two villages have seen different dances, song and their traditional and modern musical instrument dresses side by side.

Theoretically the study has related to magico-religious collective conscious among Garo community. As a result the Garo dance was traditionally based on production and ritual. It is continuing generation to generation for the purpose of reflection of analysis. In the same time with society has passed on harmony and unity relation with society at large. The evolution of dance, its dynamics from primitive to modern changes their way of life as whole. In context of them Garo dance transformed and integrated with modern. Garo learn, listen and performance with multiculture like Bengali, Hindi, English and their tradition. It is significantly emerging that the cultural pluralism has brought them integrated with society at large and the world. The expansion of mass media and communication has brought them is a complex. However it has predominated by the tradition of their belief and ritual. The present study has emphasis on anthropological implications that emerge may be outlined as follows;

Firstly, the Garo is one of the small ethnic group in Bangladesh, does not constitute a isolable whole. Rather it is in the process of transition and succumbing to both direct and indirect forces of social change specially within the music, dance and culture.

Secondly, the diversified changes of life of the Garos are not equally significant and marked. As an ethnic group, they have lost its traditional characteristics of distinct and isolable whole. Due to more exposed to modern mass media, urban culture and life style of the society at large. However, till continues to maintain ethnic identity separate from the rest of the society.

Thirdly, traditional religion, the Garos in Bangladesh are also being thrown out by the christianity. As a result, they seem to have lost their traditional clan, family, values and norms as well as religious activities. Now they are towards moving a society at large.

Fourthly, the traditional or indigenous dance of Garo is predominately based on production, festival and religio-magical use with rhythmic sound of their own instruments. In context of global and influence of exposer, mass media communication have brought them transnational ethnic towards mainstream. Finally, the Garos in Bangladesh are in the process of becoming a part of the society at large and extinct their traditional way of life as well as dances and musical instruments. It is in time and space to preserve as a cultural heritage as well as formulate hypothesis for changing patteredn of Garo culture and dance. However, they believe that indigenous dance never be died from our heart and soul and dance is our intrinsic part of life.

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Appendix (A)

গারো গান

১

(ওয়ানগালা উৎসব)

হাই সারি রিনামা
দথু সুয়ে রনামা
থাংসিরিরি জাজং নাম্মা
নকমা ওয়ানগালেং আনা । ।

জাগিৎ থিংগিত দাক্কেসা
আইয়াও জাকথি রিম্মেসা
দাকগুদাকদাক নিথোরিরি
জুইসারি রনা হাই । ।

বিলদিং বিলদাং দাকনারে
বিদিংওনি জিৎনারে
রনদু রনদু জারিকেসা
হাই সারি রবনে ।

দামা দাদি চিংচাংএ
আইয়াও থিন্না থত্রাংএ
নাম্মে নাম্মে দং এ দং এ
দাদি চাং এ রবনে ।

চলো সখী
নাচতে চলো
চাঁদনী রাতে নবান্ন উৎসবে । ।

পায়ে পায়ে হুন্দ তুলে
চোখে চোখে রেখে
চলো আমরা আজ নাচি ।

তাল হারিয়ে যেওনা
দল খেয়ে সারো না
এক সাথে দলে দলে
চলো আমরা আজ নাচি ।

ঢাক ঢোল বাজিয়ে
শ্রুতি মধুর আওয়াজে
ভাল আছি ভাল থাকবো এই নাচের উৎসবে ।

২

নিনা সিমাদিম দিম
বুরুং বল গ্রিমগ্রিম
চুগিপ্পা আব্রিনি খবাকো
গিসিক আনসেংআ
আপসান রফানা
ওহেসি ওয়েংয়াত চিরিং সামাবাও । ।

বলনি বিবাল সিম্মিলা
আরাক সন্ধে বালগাওয়া
বিজামা রাং থরে চা.আ
খাসারা নাং নামনিকা চিম
খাথং খাসা অনগিপ্পা
দংবো রিপ্পেং নামনিকা চিন
আং গিনিসনি বারিও । ।

বুরুং বলগ্রিমরাং নিকসেং জাসেং জা
দংজাওদে দও মাৎরাং আন
নাং আগ্রেদে জাইগিন বারিও
সাফসান সান দংনা আমজা
দংবো রিপ্পেং খাসা ফাঙ্কে
আং জাংগিনি বারিও । ।

ঘন সবুজের বন
সারি সারি গাছের ফাঁকে
দুর পাহাড়ের উচু শিখরে
আঁকা বাকঁ ঝরনার ধারে
মন খুশীতে নেচে উঠে ।

বুনো ফুলের দীর্ঘস্থায়ী মধুগন্ধে
পাগল মৌমাছীদের দল
তেমনি তোমার ভালবাসায়
পূর্ণ হবো আমি যদি
থাকো আমার ভালবাসার
হৃদয় পাশে । ।

বনের সৌন্দর্য্য ফুটবেনা
যদি না থাকে পাখ-পাখালি
তেমনি তুমি যদি না থাকো পাশে
আমিও একা, শূন্য থাকবো
থাকো আমায় ভালবেসে
আমার জীবন মরন সাথে । ।

গারো নৃত্যে ব্যবহৃত তাল ও বোল

কাহারবা

ক) ব্রিদুম । মুদ । দুম । মুদ ।
দেব্রাং । ওয়ালখো । গাথু । মুদ

খ) দিং । দিং । দিম । চেং
দিং । দা দিং । দিম । চেং

গ) দিং । দিম্মু । দিম্মু । দাং
দাদি । মুতাং । দিম্মু । দাং

দাদরা

দ্রিম । চেং । চেং
ত্রিক । জেং । জেং

খেমটা

ন্দ্রিম । চেংআ । চেং
ত্রিক । জেংআ । জেং

Appendix: (B)

Questionnaire of MPhil Data Collection

1. Name: Age: Gender:
2. Educational Qualification:
3. Religion:
4. Clan:
5. Marital Status:
6. Family Members
7. Any family member dancing
8. Is there any restrictions
9. If Yes; What types
10. What types of dancing
11. Is there any difference between male and female
12. Tell your dnace rhythmic
13. Is there any traditional instrument of dance and song
14. If yes; Name of the instruments
15. Do you think that your instruments have lost
16. If yes; why have it lost
17. Instead of traditional now what types instrument you are using
18. Have you watched TV and listening radio
19. Have you watched dance in TV
20. What types of dance do you have
21. Do you like all dance
22. Which one do you like most
23. How do you learn traditional dance
24. Is there any institutional exercise, How
25. Is there anyu impact of your dance on Bengali social life
26. Have you observed Bengali dance
27. Is there any impact of Bengali dance on your social life
28. Do you imitate Bengali dance
29. Can you do Bengali dance
30. How have you learned
31. What dance do you exercise
32. Do you think youe traditional dance gradually change
33. Due to change, your traditional culture have lost
34. Is there any relation between religion and dance
35. If yes; how
36. According to age is there any difference
37. If yes; aged and new generation basis
38. Is there any competition of local dance and song
39. If yes what typrs
40. What types of values of your local dance
 - a. Social
 - b. Religious
 - c. Cultural
 - d. Others
41. Are these values changing or extinct
42. If yes; how

43. If no; how to preserve the values
44. How to prepare dance o ritual and festivals
45. If yes; what types of impact
46. What are the causes of change of traditional dance and song
47. Is there any local institution where you learn dance and song
48. If yes; what types of institutions
49. What types of initiatives are taking for preserving and functioning of your dance and song
 - a. Family level
 - b. Clan level
 - c. GO/NGO Level
 - d. Others
50. How would you involve new generation of being this process
51. How other communities are related with the process
52. Give your opinion regarding practicing of dance, song and change and preservation.

Appendix –(C) Picture of Garo dance



Bengali Dance by Garo



Dual Dance of Bengali by Garo



The Traditional Dance of Garo



The Traditional Dance of Garo



The Traditional Dance of Garo