

FOLK DRAMA ON THE DECLINE: MUGHAL TAMASHA

Silima Nanda

Deputy Director, Regional Evaluation Centre, IGNOU, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

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ABSTRACT

My article is an in-depth study of the folk theatre in Odisha which is now in its declining stage. Folk theatre in Odisha is as old as its recorded history. It reflects the culture and tradition of the rural Odisha reflecting the elements of joys and sorrows of their lives, emotions, beliefs, traditions, songs and dances, rituals, customs, religious and social behavior. It was the medium through which the communal harmony of that time was preserved. As an indigenous form it broke all kinds of formal barriers of human communication and appealed directly to the people. The Mughal Tamasha was one of the unique forms of folk theatre which satirised the feudal system of Mughal Administration. It was a multilingual improvised play with songs and dialogues in Persian, Urdu, Hindi, Bengali, and Oriya. Most probably it was created during the early part of eighteenth century when the Marathas wrested power from the Mughals locally. In the present times, the theatre form is on the decline due to the revolution of digital technology. Art lovers, social reformers and researchers now should take the initiative of restoring this dying art form.

KEYWORDS: *Folk, Culture, Songs, Theatre Form, Decline*