

Deval Chaaran who makes the story happen in the Epic of Pabu ji

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Abstract: *Deval* has to help *Pabuji* throughout the story, there is the relative strength of *Deval* and *Pabuji*: as the constant need for her help suggests, she is much the more powerful. It may seem curious that the central god is weaker than one of the other deified characters in this epic. The attitude of mixed feeling towards the goddess symbolizes the way in which she is regarded, in her various reflections, throughout Rajasthan and, no doubt, far beyond. *Deval* herself shares in this ambivalence: she is acting for good of the world, and attempting to resolve cosmic problem, but she is also the cause of much bloodshed and death. It is significant that she is a *chaaran* (woman cowherd), for it still frequently happens that *chaaran* women come to be regarded as form of the goddess, often even during their lifetime and are viewed with a mixture of reverence and fear. *Deval* is active, powerful and female: she stands very much on the *shaktiya* side of Hinduism, and she controls *Pabuji*, who is a split hero, passive and male, and who is aligned to the *Vaishnava* faction through the system of incarnation underlying his story. The power of a female shouldn't be underestimated, in this research paper the significant and powerful role of *Deval Chaarani* is being illuminated as she is the godlike character in the Epic of *Pabuji*.

Keywords: Epic narrative, Indian folklore, *Deval chaarani*, Epic of *Pabu ji*, *Phadchitra*

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I. INTRODUCTION

"Whenever evil comes to suppress the earth, the Goddess takes human form to destroy it by precipitating armed conflict." (John D Smith, *The epic of Pabuji*)

The epic of *Pabuji* is an oral epic in the *Rajasthani* language, which is performed to the present day in the Indian state of Rajasthan and since this part of the world is not generally well known. Rajasthan, situated in the west of northern India, has an area of approximately 132000 square miles, and is thus only a little smaller than Japan, or than the undivided Germany, it is in fact the second largest Indian state. Its boundary (to the West and North-West) coincides with the international border dividing India from Pakistan.

The mixed feeling of attitude towards the Goddess evident in this hymn typifies the way in which she is regarded, in her various manifestations, throughout Rajasthan- and, no doubt, far beyond. *Deval* herself shares in this ambivalence: she is acting for the good of the world, and attempting to resolve a cosmic problem, but she is also the cause of much bloodshed and death. It is significant that she is a *Chaarani*, for it still frequently happens that *Chaarani* woman come to be regarded as forms of the Goddess, often even during their lifetime and are viewed with a mixture of reverence and fear. In this research paper the significant and powerful role of *Deval Chaaran*, will be illuminating, as she is the one who keeps on reminding the duties and promises to *Pabuji Rathore*, *Deval's* continuous interventions drive the narrative in the Epic of *Pabuji*.

Folklores, folk epics and folk arts are practiced by the folks and have direct impact on the society. Women have very crucial roles and responsibilities in the family and society. Their efforts and contribution is generally ignores or not appreciated. So through the role of *Deval*, the cattle herd lady in very popular Epic of *Pabuji* from the region of Rajasthan in India, the essential role of women in the society is being illuminated. People should recognize the contribution of female members in the society, so morally they will feel strengthen and a happy person's contribution is more productive and it creates balance in the society.

Scroll painting (*Phadchitra*) on the Epic of *Pabu ji* :

In Rajasthan the story telling paintings are known as the *Phadchitra*. These artworks are in the form of rolls on the fabric and these heavy scrolls are carried by the story teller called as *Bhopa*. Making the scroll is the very lengthy process. When the *Phad* painting is ready they hang it and make it stand with the help of bamboo sticks for the narration or story telling purpose.

Bhopa narrates the story in front of the *Phad* along with the musical instrument named *Ravanhathha*, it looks like violin. In these paintings there are particular rules of composition, main hero of the story will be drawn exactly in the center and hero's face will be towards right and rest of the plots of stories will be drawn around the main hero but smaller in size and the narration will be linear.

Pabu ji the God

Pabu ji is a local deity worshipped in Rajasthan-but he is also worshipped in, though to a statistically lesser extent, in *Panjab, Sindh, Kachh, Malwa* and *Saurashtra*. *Pabuji* was a *Rathore*, a member of what was to become the ruling line of Jodhpur, but at the time in which he believed to have lived, the early fourteenth century, the *Rathores* were not yet established as a ruling dynasty. *Kolu*, over which *Pabuji* is said to have ruled, was and is a tiny and insignificant desert village, *Kolu* has certainly gained from his control of *Kolu*. All three of the broad social strata distinguished here are involved in the cult of *Pabuji*. *Pabuji* himself was a Rajput prince he is widely worshipped as a deity by the herdsmen and other throughout the Rajasthan countryside and he is served by scheduled-caste *Nayak* priests (*Bhopa*). More significant, however, his story emphasizes certain themes which are of central importance in the Hindu culture of western India, in particular certain ideals for human behavior. *Pabuji* the warrior opposes and overthrows the barbaric cow-killing, ruler *Mirza Khan*, and protects women from attack.

Character of Deval Chaaran

Deval is the cattle herd lady in the province of Rajput king *Pabuji*. She is the incarnation of Goddess. She is the support character but the strongest character of this epic. *Deval's* role is of a back seat driver. She is not the main protagonist but controlling all the events. Including other animals *Deval* possess a fine black mare, its name is *Kesar Kalami* on whom *Khinchi* (negative character) had set his heart. The mare was the rebirth of *Pabuji's* mother. As black mare was *Pabuji's* mother so *Deval* gave it to *Pabuji*. After knowing that *Deval* has given that beautiful black mare to *Pabu ji*, *Khinchi* threatens *Deval* to steal all her animals. In exchange for the mare, *Pabuji* promised to protect *Deval* and her animals from *Khinchi's* raid. Eventually *Khinchi* steals *Deval's* animals. So in the whole epic *Deval* keeps on reminding *Pabuji* to bring back her animals from *Khinchi's* trap. These are the most significant plots of the story.

The Epic of Pabuji

The *Pabu* epic follows the life and adventure of *Pabuji*, a Rajput chieftain/brigand loosely placed in fourteenth century, whose elder brother *Buro ji* rules at *Kolu* (Near Jodhpur, Rajasthan). *Pabuji* sets up his own court nearby with his loyal followers. The brothers are in frequent conflict with the *Khichi* rulers of *Jayal*. Even tactical alliance, in which they marry their sister *Pema* to the ruler *Jindrav Khichi*, is ultimately of no use.

Among the many adventures of the *Pabuji*, one took him across the seas to *Lanka*. *Pabuji* has promised *Khinchi* to bring the special red-brown camels of *Lanka* to give his niece as a wedding gift. On the way to *Lanka*, *Pabuji* passes through the kingdom of *Umarkot*, whose princess falls in love with him; He reluctantly agrees to marry her. *Pabuji* also has dealing with woman called *Deval*, a cattle & horse breeder from whom *Pabuji* acquires a magical black mare "*Kesar Kalami*". This mare had been promised to *Jindrav*, who is infuriated and in retaliation he punishes *Deval* by stealing her cattle. *Pabuji* is honor-bound to rescue *Deval's* cattle and abandons his wedding ceremony to do so.

In the First Battle that follows *Pabuji* spares *Jindrav's* life out of consideration for his sister *Pema* who is *Jindrav's* wife; but *Jindrav* returns with his allies and in this second battle *Pabuji*, his brother *Buroji*, and his followers are killed. It remains for *Pabuji's* nephew, and *Buroji's* son to avenge their death years later when he grow up.

The split hero and the Goddess

The figure of *Pabuji*, as he is presented in the epic, is highly ambiguous. As well as the pugnacious, active qualities which befit a martial hero, he has the characteristics of an '*immaculate god*', and so is calm and passive. He fights many battles- and takes no-one's life. He weds the princess- and does not consummate the marriage. He rides into war against his deadly enemy- and hands him a sword with which to kill him. His character is a mass of contradictions, his story a succession of existential dilemmas. The dilemmas that confront *Pabuji* are typical of those facing the heroes of many Indian epics, both Sanskrit and vernacular. The two opposing forces which bring them into being are well recognized in Sanskrit epic literature, where they are known as *Daiva* that which comes from the gods and *Paurusa* that which comes from the man human will. There is an interesting discussion in the *Ramayana*, where Rama who has just learned that he is to be banished instead of made crown prince, speaks in favor of accepting *Daiva* and his younger brother *Lakshmana* counters with arguments in favor of existing *Paurusa*.

Contribution of Deval Chaaran

It is *Deval* who makes this story happen. Without her constant intervention, the cosmic plan would founder: she acts on Fate's behalf to guarantee that which is preordained actually occurs. *Deval* has to 'help' *Pabuji* Throughout the story: she even 'helps' him in the final battle by assuming her full form-presumably one of the Goddess's terrible forms- and then withdrawing from him, thus securing his death and *Khinchi's* victory. The relative strength of *Deval* and *Pabuji*: as the constant need for her 'help' suggests, she is much the more powerful of the two. It may seem curious that the central God is weaker than one of the other deified characters figuring in this story, but numerous precedents, all involving incarnations of the Goddess.

In the story of the Mahabharata, it was *Draupadi*, incarnation of the Goddess, who secured the right outcome, the battle between the *Kaurvas* and the *Pandavas*, yet the central God there is Krishna, not *Draupadi*. In the Rama-story, Rama himself is the central god, but it was *Sita* who, by arranging her own abduction made sure that the necessary war took place: *Rama* would not of himself have been capable of bringing about the desired course of events. *Jelu –Jaimati* in the story of *Bagaratvats* (the first part of epic of *Devnarayan ji*) is another case of the Goddess taking incarnation to ensure that things happen as they should, in this instance by explanation of these happenings is that whenever evil comes to oppress the earth, The Goddess takes human form to destroy it by precipitating armed conflict: thus the evil *Khichi* is killed by *Rupnath* at *Deval's* instigation, and as a result of the war in which *Pabuji* died- Itself also of *Deval's* causing. This is all very well but it is difficult to accept that the goddess is notoriously bloodthirsty, so much human blood is shed entirely for the benefit of mankind.

Significance and Scope of the Study

The traditional folklores and folk arts have their roots in the tradition and culture of any region; it is the reflection of any country's customs and speaks about one country's beliefs. Folk arts have spiritual and humanistic values and bear the ultimate expressions of productive art and cognitive content. This is very unfortunate that reflection of our culture has come in the endangered category. This research will emphasize to bring out the narrative aspects and values of our traditional folklores. Through this topic the whole epic is the part of discussion, the discourse will bring the new aspects and will illuminate the contribution of a cattle herd lady.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Toohey Peter believes that the epic is a long written narrative which focuses on the exploits of a great hero or on great civilization or interaction of this main protagonist. It is a type of epic which was passed from one generation to another by mouth. The mythological epic might emphasize some distinct features like heroic actions of the heroes. The divinity and divine powers are related to this main hero. The length of the epic goes with the elevation of unique style, the glorification of past- achieved by repetitive description. There are the technical features such as similes, war scenes, set speeches, invocation of muses, councils of Gods and of the leaders, and the description of other artifacts. Ancient epic are hampered in such a way if audiences do not know the regional languages, and they are unfamiliar with that specific region.

Smith (1991) illuminates the plots where *Deval* seems the strongest character in the whole epic. Without her constant intervention, the cosmic plan would, she has to help *Pabuji* throughout the story and even she helps him in the final battle. It may seem curious that the central God is *Pabu ji* and he seems weaker than her. *Pabuji* is a Godlike folk hero.

Artists from Joshi families make scroll paintings called *Phadchitra*. These artists inhabit in the region called *Bhilwara, Shahpura, Udaipur* and *Chittorgarh* in Rajasthan. Their clients are *Bhopa* who are narrator-priests-cum-singer/musicians of these local Gods like *Pabuji*. The *Bhopas* purchase and take charge of these detailed painted scroll paintings, dedicate them on their possession, treat them as living temples and perform in front of the devotee audiences. In the scroll painting there the painted life episode of the local deity, which is narrated by professional narrator with this female counterpart, with accompaniment of musical instruments like *Ravanahattha* and choreographic dance movements. (*Jain Jyotindra, 1998*)

Bharucha (2003) says *Pabu* is a *Bhomiyo*, a protector and a martyr to cows, who chased and engages in battle with the robbers who have stolen *Deval's* cows. Many scholars say that because of *Deval* (cowherd lady) *Pabuji* was died but if he had remained alive at the end of the epic, he wouldn't be worshipped as he is now. *Ahuja (1994)* asserts that Rajasthan state has one of the most interconnected societies in the country. It has combination of history, customs, folk literature, art and architecture.

Kavita Singh (1998) The disastrous battle which nearly destroys the *Bagrawat* clan occurs because one of the *Bagrawats* abducts the bride of a powerful king. The responsibility for this act lies not with the man but with the woman whose sole purpose was to bring the clan to ruin, just as, according to this epic, *Sita* was born to trouble *Ravana* and *Rama*, and the *Draupadi* was born to harass the *Pandavas* and *Kauravas*. Women are not to touch either the *Phad* or the platform within the temple on which *Devji's* icon is placed.

Hypothesis: *Deval*, the cattle herd lady plays the pivotal role and she is the back seat driver in the whole Epic.

Research Method: For collection of primary data semi structured interview schedule, telephonic conversation, group discussions and observations is used, the secondary data collection was done through the books, journals, newspaper editorials, blogs and websites.

Limitations

To embrace with the possible limitation will make the research approach crisp, these are as follows: Explorations of only Oral Narratives in *Phadchitra* of Rajasthan:

- In oral narratives focus is there on the Epic of *Pabuji*.
- Significant role of *Deval* cattle herd lady and its impact on other relative roles and plots.
- Cluster is the *Kolu*, a remote village of Jodhpur district, Rajasthan, India.

III. CONCLUSION

Pabuji is worshiped as the *Bhomiyo* God. As a consequence, *Pabuji* in fact does very little in person, and often has to be goaded into action by fate in the shape of a goddess, *Deval*. More than once he actually tries to avoid the inevitable: fearful of losing his celibacy by being compelled to live with *Phulvanti*, he attempts to delay the wedding by insisting on saffron being obtained to dye the garments of members of the wedding-procession; and he could not be said to show any great eagerness to leave *Kolu* in pursuit of the stolen cattle. On both occasions it is *Deval* who puts an end to his prevarications. Once *Pabuji* has returned from Lanka, indeed, it is *Deval* who controls the events of the story as a whole, just as it was *Deval* who engineered the hostility between *Pabuji* and *Khinchi* by allowing the former to take possession of *Kesar Kalami*, the mare whom *Khinchi* had set his heart. Keeping in mind the details, it can be said that *Pabuji* is nothing more and nothing less than a *Bhomiyo*, a protector of cows who chases the engages in the battle with the robbers who stolen *Deval's* cows. Needless to say he dies in the battle, if he had remained alive at the end of the epic, he wouldn't be worshipped.

Deval is powerful, active and female: she stands very much on the *Sakta* (Elements of *Sakti*-worship: *Sakti* is the Goddess viewed as the energy which alone can animate her spouse Shiva) side of Hinduism and she controls *Pabuji*, who is a split hero, passive and male, and who is aligned to the *Vaishnava* faction through the system of incarnations underlying his story. *Deval* would have gone with the flow of the events like the other followers. She is the one who used to poke *Pabuji* in every significant plot and used to make him remember his promises and accountability. From the point of view of a narrative, these twists in the plots make story interesting. This epic is not any other story, it is a very auspicious story of Rajasthan, and story-telling process entails many rituals. Epic of *Pabuji* goes on the whole night like a vigil. *Pabuji's* devotees sit the whole night to listen to this epic. *Pabuji* is a God: his worshippers credit him with the ability to cure illness and bring good fortune. But he is only a little God-greater than a *Bhomiyo*, no doubt but not as great as Rama or Krishna and incomparably less powerful than the Goddess *Deval*.

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Glossary

Bagaratvats: a tiger had 24 sons out his 24 wives, they are called bagaravat brothers in the epic of Devnarayan ji.

Bhopa: Oral narrator/priest singer.

Bhomiyo: The protector of cows who sacrifices his life to save cows from any harm.

Buro ji: Elder brother of *Pabuji*.

Chaaran: Cattle herd lady/man.

Daiva: Holy or divine.

Deval: Name of the cattle herd lady and the incarnation of Goddess.

Devnarayan ji: A local deity of Rajasthan worshipped by the Gurjar and other cow and sheep-herding communities. He is believed to be the incarnation of lord *Laxmana*.

Draupadi: the most important character of *Hindu* epic *Mahabharata* and queen of five *Pandavas* brothers.

Jelu –Jaimati : a princess and incarnation of goddess in the epic of *Devnarayan ji*.

Jindrav Khinchi: *Pabuji's* great enemy, married to *Pabuji's* sister.

Kaurva: a legendary king who is the ancestor of many of the characters of the *Hindu* epic *Mahabharata*.

Kesar Kalam: Black fine mare, who was the incarnation of *Pabuji's* mother.

Kutch: District of Gujarat state in western India.

Kolu: A remote village and the birthplace of *Pabuji* in Jodhpur district, Rajasthan, India.

Laksmana: Younger brother of lord Rama.

Malwa: A historic region of west-central India occupying a plateau of volcanic origin

Mirza Khan: the wicked Muslim ruler of *Patan* in *Gujrat* state in India.

Nayak: a low-caste community identified with the performance of the *Pabuji* epic.

Pema: she is the sister of *Pabuji* and marries to *Zindrav Khinchi*.

Paurusa: Man power.

Pabuji: Local deity of Rajasthan, India, he is believed to be the protector of cattle.

Phadchitra: The scroll painting of Rajasthan, which is painted by the natural colors and their subjects are mythological stories.

Panjab: An Indian state situated in north-east region and famous for five rivers.

Pandavas: they were five skilled and powerful sons of king *Pandu* in the epic *Mahabharata*.

Rama: Incarnation of lord Vishnu in the epic *Ramayana*.

Ravanahattha: A violin like musical instrument

Rathore: In the northern part of India, Rajput clan ruled several states.

Rupnath: Son of *Pabuji's* elder brother, who was born after death of *Buroji* and *Pabuji* in the final battle.

Saurashtra: Also known as *Kathiawad* or *Kathiawar*, is peninsular region of Gujarat, India.

Shaiktya: A clan, who believe in the power of the Goddess.

Sindh: one of the four provinces of Pakistan, in southeast of the country.

Vaishnava: A clan, who believe in the power of the Vishnu incarnation.

Figure 1 *Pabuji Phad*, by Jaravchand Joshi of Bhilwara . This is a very fine Phad dated 1938 A.D. and is the property of the Royal Tropical Institute, Tropenmuseum, Amsterdam (inventory no. 37.51-543) As commonly happens, the right-hand edge of the painting has been damaged by wear (Bhopa always carry Phad about rolled from left to right), resulting in the loss of a small strip. Ernst van de Wetering has supplied an indication of the content of this missing fragment, based on Srilal Joshi's drawings of the relevant scene.



Figure 2 *Pabu ji* the god cattle herd lady



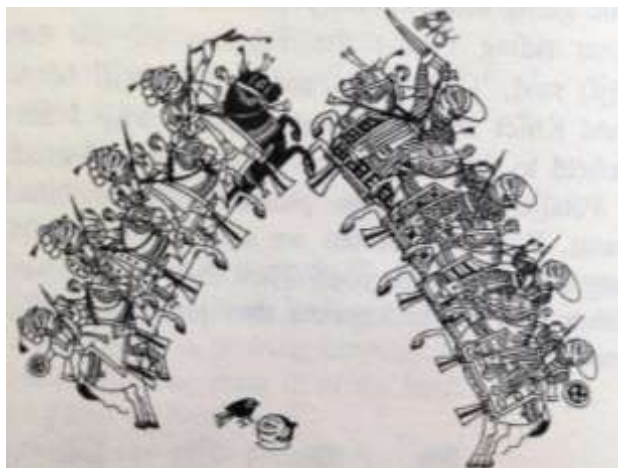
Figure 3 *Deval*, the



Figure 4 Lady *Deval* stops *Pabuji* when he was going for his wedding *Pabu ji* died



Figure 5 Final battle in which



Dr, Shraddha Shukla. "Deval Chaaran who makes the story happen in the Epic of Pabuji." *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 27(02), 2022, pp. 31-37.