



## Syncretism in religious and cultural dimension: An empirical study among Hindu, Muslim and Christian community in Chapra block, Nadia, West Bengal

Rimi Sarkar<sup>1\*</sup>, Samita Manna<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ICSSR Doctoral Fellow, University of Kalyani, Nadia, West Bengal, India

<sup>2</sup> Professor of Sociology, University of Kalyani, Nadia, West Bengal, India

### Abstract

Syncretism has recently re-emerged as a valuable tool for understanding the complex dynamics of ethnicity, interconnectedness and post-modernism. Religious syncretism exhibits blending of two or more religious belief systems into a new system, or may be due to the incorporation into a religious tradition of beliefs from unrelated traditions. Cultural syncretism is the spontaneous normal ongoing process of assimilation. With the passage of time different groups or communities adopt many new cultural traits and absorb themselves within it. The study is also trying to reveal the nature of assimilation in various forms like the syncretism in the form of *Salad Bowl*, syncretism in the form of *Sandwich* or the simple borrowing cultural traits from the dominating groups. Through this process of assimilation, the people of various communities exchange their beliefs, customs and practises and create a new mixed cultural form to accommodate them in the larger horizon of the society.

**Keywords:** cultural syncretism, religious syncretism, religious diversity, mixed culture

### Introduction

India is a country known for its unity among diversity. There are various religions, languages, cultural diversities but the process of synthesis or integration more specially it can be said that syncretism has been going on. Thus, equilibrium between cultural diversity and syncretism is the foundation of Indian civilization. The ethnic diversity of the people of India is revealed through their multiple colours, languages, religions, customs, festivals, dresses, and food habits. The socio-cultural and religious syncretism stands for the merging or union of different socio-cultural intuitions, religious and theological beliefs.

### Literature Review

India's culture is a composite mixture of varying styles and influences. India's religions, languages, food, customs, clothes, dance and music differ from place to place within the country. India is amongst the most diverse societies in the world. It has people from all the major religions in the world – Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains and Zoroastrian. Even though Hindus constitute about 82 percent of the population, there are more than 149 million Muslims in the country, making it the second largest population in the world. Religious diversity is coupled with enormous linguistic and cultural diversity (Mahajan, 2006). Culture is a form of human activity. Each generation must work to preserve, reproduce and select the necessary values, knowledge, principles and then renew them and modify them according to the changing realities of life. Customs include traditional forms of labour, behavioural pattern, lifestyles and systems of upbringing (Erasov & Singh, 2006) [4]. Cultural factors play an important role in the shaping of the ethos. The ethos is a historically evolved community of people with shared, relatively stable cultural and psychological features, a common language, aware of their

own unity and their differences from other such communities and having a name for themselves.

In the anthropological study of religion in India, the major emphasis has been given on the descriptive account of religious customs and their association with ethnic groups, including the tribes, the themes of purity or pollution in relation to caste system, descriptive concepts relating to religious phenomena and the modernization processes.

Bose in his book *The Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption* clearly mentioned about the Juangs who had started worshipping the Hindu gods and goddesses, although it was done in their own way. Starting with the ceremonial bath in the morning, the offerings of sun-dried rice to the gods and goddesses and uttering the sacred terms *satya*, *devata*, *dharma*, it has been proved how strongly religious ceremonies of Juang have been influenced by those of the neighbouring Brahmanical model. There is a clear indication that Hindu religious ideas have penetrated into their culture. The Juangs seem to be losing pride in their own culture and are adopting Hindu culture with a certain amount of avidity (Bose, 1975) [2].

Now the tribal people, throughout the country, are now under the process of changes. These changes are not homogeneous in nature. As an example, the elite Santals of Murshidabad district has got the opportunity to assimilate with the urban people and accepted the urban ways of life. On the other hand, within the urban life once again they have formed a new group with some marginal characteristics restoring a few traits of tribal culture with the urbanity (Bhattacharyya, 2013) [1].

One research project *Tradition versus Modernity: Mother and Child Health (0 – 5 years) In Two Integrated Tribal Development Blocks of Paschim Midnapore, West Bengal: Problems and Developments* were conducted by Prof. Samita Manna on three dominated tribal groups of the

Santals, Mundas and Lodhas of Paschim Midnapore, W.B. The study revealed that irrespective of their ethnic identities and geographical locations all of the tribal people possessed similar characteristics in relation to acceptance the form of modernity. (Manna, 2011) [9].

Sanskritization was a widespread cultural and social process among the Hindus in different parts of India. The tribal people are not an exceptional one as they think themselves a part of the Hindu Society and culture. According to Srinivas (1972), Sanskritization is the process by which a low Hindu caste or Tribal or other group, changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high, and frequently like the twice born caste. Srinivas has stated, in his book *Social Change in Modern India* (1972), that Sanskritization is not confined only to Hindu castes but also seen among tribal and semi tribal groups such as Bhils of western India, Gonds and Oraons of central India etc. This process of change usually impacts the tribe with the undergoing Sanskritization claiming them to be a caste, called as Hindu.

On the other hand, Kalia (1959) [6] has described the process of tribalization which is seen among Jaunsar – Bawar in Uttar Pradesh and in the Bastar region of Madhya Pradesh. According to Kalia, the high caste Hindu temporarily borrows tribal customs, mores, rituals and beliefs which are in many respects antithetical to their own. Kalia's example may be illustrated as radical changes which can be seen in the style of life of Hindu people when they move away from their reference group.

On account of various levels of cultural contact, adoption and incorporation, the tribal people have been borrowing many cultural traits and religious practices from various sects and major religious group such as the Hindus, Muslims, Christians and others. Hence the different tribal groups have been assimilating with the different cultural groups by restoring their own cultural ethos from time immemorial without being concerned about nomenclature.

Syncretism is a contentious term, often taken to imply 'in authenticity' or 'contamination', the infiltration of a supposedly 'pure' tradition by symbols and meaning seen as belonging to other, incompatible tradition. Yet within anthropology, where notions of the 'purity' of traditions have not had much credibility for some time, syncretism has been ascribed a neutral, and often positive, significance.

Yet although syncretic processes currently emerge large in such writing, there seems to be uneasiness about the term in postmodern anthropology. It is in particular the term 'creolization', borrowed from linguistics, which currently enjoys 'favoured concept status' (for example, Hannerz, 1987). This uneasiness about 'syncretism' in contemporary anthropology may be due to the term evoking for some of us the existence of a 'purity' or 'authenticity' in contrast to which it is defined.

Syncretism is as old as Plutarch, who seems to have coined the term as an act or system of blending or reconciling heterogeneous elements. Syncretism is a process following acculturation, assimilation, and fusion of both the original element persists (Hastings, 1980). Religious Syncretism exhibits blending of two or more religious belief system into a new system or the incorporation into a religious tradition of belief from unrelated tradition. Blending of different supernatural forces or the blending of magic, witchcraft with beliefs may give birth to the concept of syncretism. Religious syncretism is the fusion of diverse religious

beliefs and practices. Instances of religious syncretism –as for example, Gnosticism (a religious dualistic system that incorporated elements from the oriental mystery religion) were particularly prevalent during the Hellenistic period.

Syncretism is the combination of different forms of belief or practice according to the Merriam Webster Dictionary. In an article on syncretism in the 1911 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, it says it's most frequent use, however, is in connection with religious development of antiquity, when it denotes the tendency, especially prominent from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries of the Christian era, to simply and unity the various pagan religions. Syncretism has recently re-emerged as a valuable tool for understanding the complex dynamics of ethnicity, interconnectedness and post-modernism. In the present era of increasing cultural condensation, syncretism is a prevailing event. The sociologists and social anthropologists have thrown much light on the variety of religious forms through their studies of belief systems, rituals, symbols and meaning all over the world but they have not paid adequate attention to the phenomenon of syncretism, though we find a few exceptions (Remond Firth, 1970).

### Objectives of the Study

In this paper some research objectives have tried to examine to understand the syncretic structure of Hindu, Muslim and Christian communities. The Objectives of the study are as follows:

- To explore and understand the phenomena of syncretism developed among the Hindus, Muslims and Christians from different of socio-cultural and religious perspectives;
- To study the changing life of the Hindus, Muslims and Christians in relation to their beliefs, customs, rituals and practices;
- To explore the way of restoring their culture that is customs, rituals, belief patterns etc., in their day to day interaction;
- To study the Birth, Death and Marriage rituals of these three communities for understanding their past and present religious as well as cultural practises;
- To find out the effect of cultural syncretism in their ways of life;

### Research Methodology

#### Research Area

For the present study, Nadia district of the state of west Bengal have been selected purposively. In Nadia district, 72.15% Hindu, 26.76% Muslim and 0.65% Christian population live together according to 2011 census. From this district Chapra block have been selected purposively where the three communities' people stay together. In Chapra block as per 2011 census the Hindu population is 115396 (37.15%), Muslim population is 1855506 (59.72%) and Christian is 9467(3.05%) in this block there have seventy-seven (77) villages, from the population it has been seen that it is Muslim dominated village. In Chapra block six villages under four panchayats are studied. Data have been collected from three community people who are converted and are not converted. Every community is divided into number of conversions. Total sample households are distributed according to the areas of panchayats and villages. For each community different villages have been selected. Number of villages is not uniform considering its size and density of

population, because the number of populations is not same for each and every village.

### Research Sample

So, for this study total 150 households have been selected. Next from these three communities purposively 75 households (from each community 25 households, who are not converted) have been selected then 75 households (at least 25 households from each community) have been selected who are converted into one community to another.

### Data Collection

All the data have been collected through direct interview method with the help of a structured schedule consisting of a number of open-end and close-end questions, along with non-participant observation. Each and every household have been studied thoroughly. In many cases, through case studies a detailed history of their marriage process, birth and death rituals or another cultural function or activities or various activities in their day to day life which related to the cultural activities have been considered for this purpose. Besides that, some *Moulabi* (from Muslim community), *Padri* (from Christian community) and *Purohit* or priest (from Hindu community) from different villages have also been contacted and relevant information have been collected according to the objectives of this study.

### Customs, Rituals and Religious Practices among three (Hindu, Muslim and Christian) Communities

Centuries of contact between Hindu Muslim and Christian communities were bound to result in a mutual understanding and a process of give and take. Moreover, many of the new converts to Muslim or Islam religion could not break away from their Hindu past and followed their old ways of life and culture, side by side with the Islamic tenets most of which were alien to them. Thus, these communities Hindu Muslim and Christian living together and having daily intercourses among themselves evolved a popular religion and culture in several parts of India, especially Bengal.

In Hindu ceremonies relating to birth, childhood, puberty, and marriage, death, the conventional folk rites play an important part. The present study has revealed that many religious rites and ceremonies practised by Hindu are also taken part in or in vogue among many converted Muslims and Christians, whose Hindu forefathers used to observe them. Even they were found to observe '*Stri Achar*' i.e., a ritual performed by the Hindu women during the marriage.

### Birth Ceremony

As rituals play an important part in the life of the people all over the world, the behaviour pattern of life of not only an individual, but also of a group, can be well assessed from the prevailing nature of rituals in any society.

In the country where religious freedom has been sanctioned by the constitution for the peaceful co-existence and to bring harmony between different religious groups, the inter religious prejudices have not vanished so far. During pregnancy the prayer is to secure her health and that of the foetus so that both might remain alive and healthy after Parturition. In Bengal, the ceremony is called *Mukhe Bhaat* (literal meaning – rice in your mouth). For baby girls, *Annaprashan* is performed on odd months (of their life, not the calendar year), generally the 5<sup>th</sup> or the 7<sup>th</sup> month. For boys, the ritual is performed on even months, either on the

6<sup>th</sup> or the 8<sup>th</sup> month. What follows is specific to *Mukhe Bhaat*, and other regions probably celebrate a bit differently. Traditionally this ceremony is carried out in the child's paternal home where Mama (Maternal Uncle) or *Dadu* (Maternal Grandfather) does the honour of feeding the 'First Grain of Rice.' The food is presented on silver plates and bowls for the child! The centrepiece of the food is the *Payesh*, a sweet dessert made with rice, milk & sugar – traditional rice pudding. The importance of the *Payesh* cannot be overstated for Bengali. It is the first solid that goes into a Bengali child. Traditionally, it has been a practice to name the baby on the twelfth day in Maharashtra and probably within a few weeks all over India. This ceremony can be held on the stipulated day in accordance with the religious and traditional practice but its celebration should be postponed till the child becomes at least six months old.

During and after the birth of a Muslim child, during and after the birth of a Muslim child, there are certain rituals the mother and father must perform. All Muslim fathers are to recite an *adhan* in their infant's right ear so that it is the first words he or she hears. An *adhan* is a call to prayer that is announced from mosques five times per day. After a Muslim child is born, it is customary for an *Aqiqah* which is a community celebration, to be held on the seven day after the birth of a child. The name is chosen for a new born baby according to the Quran. The name chosen should be meaningful. A number of rites are performed on the seven day of the child's life. Muslim parents often shaved their baby's head on this day. The hair is weight then the equal weight in silver or gold according to their socio-economic condition is given to the charity. On the day of *Aqiqah* one animal specially goat is slaughter, one for baby girl child and two for baby boy, and then the animal's meat is distributed among the family members and neighbours or give the poor in that area.

When a child is born in the Christian community, they follow some rituals. The first ever ritual or ceremony that a Christian will go through is always going to be related to birth. The celebration consists of: Naming Ceremony, Dedication and Infant Baptism. They will make dedications that their child will live under god's will. During a Christian christening, the parents of the child will often make their declarations. The significant part of this ritual is that the child is baptized with holy water. This was started many years ago and now is a symbol of Christ. It is usual to invite intimate friends to a simple meal after the christening, when the christening cake is cut and handed to the guests.

Gradually with the passage of time they have been assimilating with the neighbouring culture, these three communities follow their culture in each other and create a new culture among them. As an example, it is noticed *Name giving ceremony or Annaprasan ceremony* is not Muslim and Christian's own traditional ritual but they perform this ceremony like the other Hindu dwellers.

### Death Ceremony

Generally Hindu believes that life and death are part of concept of Samsara or rebirth. The ultimate goal for many Hindus are to become free from desire, thereby escaping samsara and attaining moksha, the transcendent state of salvation. When a Hindu is approaching death, a priest should be contacted and the priest and the family should gather to be with the dying person. A small amount of water

from the Ganges River should be placed in the dying person's mouth. According to the Hindu rituals after death a person, touching to the body is affirmed as impure. The funeral should take place as soon as possible. A priest should be contacted and can help guide in the decision-making process and direct the family to a Hindu friendly funeral home. The funeral procession is followed by throwing fried rice (which is called *Khyii* in Bengali) and pice and in case of death of old man and woman, by a kirtan Party (band of musicians singing devotional song) while carrying the dead the words *Balo Hari Hari Bol* are uttered by the cremators. After reaching the burning ghat, traditionally the body is washed by family members and close friends. After cremation a handful of ashes which is called *vibhuti* along with a bone are thrown into the water of a river or pond. Historically Hindu cremations take place on the Ganges River in India. According to the Hindus, cremation is thought to be the best mode of disposal of the dead though the Muslim and Christian think otherwise and bury their dead. The cremation of the deceased marks the beginning of the mourning period which lasts for 13 days for Namasudra and 11 days for Brahmins. After 13 days of death, the family members observed some rituals. Among them the ritual of *Ghat kamano* takes place on the 7<sup>th</sup> or 11 day and then *Sraddha* ceremony is held when the sons and other male members of the family saved their head. The concluding ceremony of the person's life is the ceremony of death anniversary. After one year after the death, the family members observed *Bathsarik Anusthan* (death anniversary). In Hindu religion it is belief that with this rites and rituals the soul of the dead will entered (*Amritadham*) in the peace in the other world.

In Muslim society, when a person is death family members and other neighbours all are present in the home and shows their kindness to the family. In Islam it is belief that death as a transition from one state of being to another, not as an end. As soon as death has occurred the present members should say *Inna lillahi wa Inna Ilayhi raji'un* (we belong to Allah and to Allah we shall return). Cremation is forbidden for Muslim. They prepare the body for burial; it must be washed (*Gosol*) and shrouded (*Kafan*). The body should be washed in some specific order like upper right side, upper left side, lower right side, and lower side. Women's hair should be washed and braided into three braids. After washed the body is covered in white cotton sheet. Then the body is placed to the mosque (masjid) for funeral prayers known as *salat- al- janazah*. This *namaz* should be performed by all members. After that the body take place for burial. Women are not allowed in the funeral rituals. An Iman (Islamic priest) or the oldest male family member stands at the front facing Mecca (birth place of Muhammad), and the body is placed in front of him. No discussion takes place at the time of burial, but all guests pray for the soul of the departed. After the body is buried all guests go the house. Under Islamic funeral customs, the mourning period for a relative is typically three days. A widow may mourn for four months and ten days but now a day this ritual based on the nature of family members. In Islamic culture, death is accepted as a natural part of life. The forty days after death is a traditional memorial service, family gathering, ceremonies and rituals in memory of departed on the forty day after his or her death.

Every religion has special death rituals and processes associated with the burial or cremation ceremony. In

Christian society, a dead body is buried not cremated. However, in present day the trend has changed and lot of Christians are now open to the idea of burning the dead body instead of buried it. When a person's dying, a priest will come and prepare the body for rituals. In Roman Catholic Church a priest will anoint the person with holy oil, this is called last rites. And after that the body is placed in a coffin. The Bible neither favours nor forbids the process of cremation. However, according to the Christian rituals, after washed the body dressed the body well and keep the body in a coffin and decorate with flowers. People may sit near the coffin and pray for soul of the dead. Taking the body for funeral is always in the presence of priest. The coffin is brought to the church and after a short prayer the body is taken to a cemetery. Then relatives, friends are present there. At first father give the soil on the coffin with some words in the grave. The elder son should stand at the head of the coffin and second son should stand at the foot. Usually the rites by the graveside are brief and there are certain prayers that the priest chants.

### Weeding Ceremony

*Vivah* or marriage is the most important of all Hindu ceremonies. It is marking the individual entry into the new life of the householders. A Hindu must marry in his own varna only but not descended from a family having a common gotra (lineage). Hindu marriage ceremonies are colourful, and the celebration may extend for days depending upon the social and economic status of the bride and bridegroom. Most Hindu marriage is arranged marriage. Even in love marriages, the couple prefer marrying in the traditional style in the presence of their parents and families. Bengali Hindu wedding starts from *ashirbad* on this auspicious day the elders of the groom's side go to bless the bride by sprinkling *dhann* (husked rice) and *dubba* (trefoil) and giving them gold ornaments. Then before the day of marriage *aiburovat* (last meal before marriage) is given to the bride some rituals are associated with the marriage function. It starts with *dodhi mangal*, at the day of marriage in early morning five or seven married women adorn the brides's hands with traditional bangles with called *sankha* and *pola* one pair of red and one pair of white. Then curd and rice is given to the bride with five married women. This ritual is celebrated on groom's side also.

Then other rituals like *gaye holud*, *holud kota*, *Jol soya* etc are performed by the married women. After complete this ritual at the evening time, there are some rituals are performed at first *jamai baran* when the groom reached to the bride's house usually mother or any elder woman welcome to the groom with *dubba* and *dhan* placed on a bamboo winnow which is called *Kulo*. After reaching of groom marriage will start with *saat paak* where the bride seated on a low wooden stool called *pidi* is lifted by her brothers' and is taken round round the groom is they are winded up securely to each other. After *saat paak* the bride and groom are made to look at each other which called *subhodristi*. After that with the presence of priest *kanyya samprodan*, *yogna*, *saptapadi*, etc rituals are occurred and this marriage rituals are end with *sindur daan* and blessing from parents.

In Muslim society, the first wedding ritual is the *Istikhara*, wherein the religious head takes consent form Allah to perform the wedding. After it is done, the groom's mother visits the bride's house with sweets and Imam-Zamin (a

silver or gold coin wrapped in silken cloth). It is tied by her to the upper portion of the girl's hand. This is called *Imam-Zamin* ceremony. The next is *Magni*, wherein the groom's family members visit the bride's house with sweets and fruits. This is reciprocated by the bride's family as well. Nowadays, the couple celebrate engagement ceremony by following other wedding rules. Then Mehndi Ceremony is the next ceremony, which is held just before the marriage. During this ceremony, the hands and feet of the bride are adorned with henna designs. On the main wedding day, the *Baraat* comes to the bride's house. On the wedding venue, they are given a hearty welcome and the groom enjoys a glass of sherbet with his brother-in-law. Soon after this, the *Nikah* is commenced. There are two religious heads present at the place, representing the two parties. The amount of *Mehar*, or *Denmohaor* a compulsory amount of money to be given to the bride by the groom's family is also decided. After this, the Maulavi asks the bride three times, whether she accepts the concerned person as her husband, with settled the amount of Denmohor. After her consent, the groom is asked three times, whether he accepts the concerned woman as his wife, with the decided amount of Mehar. After his consent, the *Nikahnama* is signed by the couple. This is followed by the recital of *kobula*, a religious discourse. Blessings are showered upon the bride and the groom for a prosperous married life and recite Namaz by both bride groom party. Following a lavish dinner, the couple is seated face to face each other, with their heads covered by a dupatta. The Holy Quran and a mirror placed are placed between them, through which they are allowed to see each other for the first time which is known as *ArasiMushaf*.

In Bengali Christian wedding have many attendances. The wedding is generally held at church and the priest is then calls upon the bride and groom. They will both hold the hands and take vows as per the instructions of the priest. At Bengali Christian wedding also keep the ring exchange ceremony is held in church. The ring that is used as a sign of love and rust and round in shape shows that how their life will be perfect together between the couple. Then the priest tells the couple that they are now husband and wife. There will be some reading from the Bible and the minister gives a sermon. The brides and groom, along with two witnesses sign the register, which is legal requirement. They receive a legally marriage certificate. Then the wedding is followed by a reception. The newly married couple cuts the wedding cake. The couple also has their first dance together and births also dance with her father.

All these social and religious rituals have been observed into the Muslim as well as Christian domestic life through converts, Hindu wives, patronage of the sultans, and social intercourse for centuries. From birth rituals to marriage or other festivals are observed by most of the converted Muslim and Christian in Bengal as well in India. Most of these rituals are indigenous from Hindu origin. Some religious rites and worship are commonly held or participated all over India by many Hindus, Muslims and Christians or converts.

Many Muslims are found to join with their Hindu neighbours in their religious as their ancestors did the same from time immemorial before they embraced Islam. Many village Muslim observe the Holi, Diwali, Nababarsha (Bengali new year), Basant Panchami etc. Hindu titles are also found in use in Muslim like Choudhuri, Mandal,

Biswas etc. Again, some Muslim and Christian families practice some wedding rituals following of Hindu rituals. In this connection Mr. Blunt said, 'in the matter of marriage the customs of communities descended from Hindu converts, are often curious mixtures of Hindu and Muslim rites. The use of combined Muslim and Hindu names is not uncommon in many parts of Bengal. The practices such as *Gaye Holud* (smearing of turmeric) during the time of marriage have been also assimilated from the neighbour Hindu. The proverb ritual of the Hindu community is '*Baro mase terro Parbon*' (thirteen religious festivals in twelve months in a year). It is also noticed that many converted Muslim as well as Christian observed *Nabanna* in village. Side by side it has been seen that in this time Christians offer the new rice in the name of Jesus Christ in the Church. It has been also observed that many Muslim takes part in the famous festival *Janmastami*, *Bhai Dooj*, *Budhha Jayanti* etc even Muslim and Christian people celebrate Kali puja and Diwali and they observed Saraswathi puja and give the Anjali (offering flowers towards god with folded hands) together towards Saraswathi maa.

### Conclusion

In this present study, it has been observed that the culture of Hindu, Muslim and Christian community blend with each other and create cultural plurality. At the same time in this syncretism the traditional aroma of those cultures has been mixed and generate a new cultural vision. From the discussion, it is clear that cultural syncretism has several direct and indirect impacts on the traditional culture. The impact is evident in their day to day activities of these communities. This process of cultural syncretism has brought many changes in their day to day activities. When age old customs and traditions are no more attached in their daily life, they have been influenced by the new culture and adopted new cultural and new religious traits from the locality and neighbours. This paper has taken an attempt to find out the linkages between traditional ways of life of the community and adopting the new cultural traits. It explores the different dimensions of the impact of cultural, religious syncretism on these three communities. The experience of socio-cultural, religious changes and cultural differences of this community has brought the new connotation of their life.

### References

1. Bhattacharyya S. Changing Status of a Marginalised Group in Murshidabad District: The Santals. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis, 2013.
2. Bose NK. The Structure of Hindu Society. Orient Longman, New Delhi, India, 1975.
3. Das NK. Culture, Religion and philosophy: Critical Studies in Syncretism and Inter Faith Harmony. Rawat Publication, Jaipur, India, 2003.
4. Erasov B, Singh Y. The Sociology of Culture. Rawat Publication, New Delhi, India, 2006.
5. Gupta A, Ferguson J. Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference. *Cultural Anthropology*. 1992; 7(1):6-23.
6. Kalia SL. Sanskritization and Tribalization. *Bulletin of the Tribal Research Institute*. 1959; 2(4):43-53.
7. Linton R. The Tree of Culture. Alfred A. Knopf Inc, New York, USA, 1955.

8. Malakar K. Survival of Hindu Rituals among the Converts. (In). Explorations in Anthropology. (Eds.). Pramanik. S. K. and Manna. S. ISRAA, Bidisa, Paschim Midnapur, India, 2006.
9. Manna S. Tradition versus Modernity: Mother and Child Health (0 – 5 years) In Two Integrated Tribal Development Blocks of Paschim Midnapore, West Bengal: Problems and Developments. Unpublished Dissertation, 2011.
10. Stewart C, Shaw, R. Syncretism/Anti-syncretism – The Politics of Religious Synthesis. Routledge, London, 1994.
11. Veer Syncretism P, Multiculturalism and the Discourse of Tolerance. In C. Stewart and R. Shaw eds. Syncretism/Anti-syncretism – The Politics of Religious Synthesis. Routledge, London, 1994.