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INTRODUCTION
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Introduction

In the present age of revolution in information, communication and technology, it seems anomalous to talk about folk media. But folk media have played a notable role in our country in providing entertainment, fostering sense of values and conveying specific messages and even information. With the coming of modern media, the traditional forms have been under pressure. The novelty of modern media has greater appeal than the appeal of familiarity of the traditional forms. In this conflict, some forms have disappeared where as some have shown vitality, adaptability and powers of assimilation. There has been a new realisation in recent years that traditional folk art forms must be conserved. Thus, the study on potentiality of folk arts as means of communication is more relevant in the present scenario.

The traditional folk media are the people’s performances in their conventional context. While the new area of urban folklore is gaining increasing popularity in the field of research in recent years, the focus here is on the traditional folk media. This area generally includes folk dance forms, rural drama and musical variety of the village people. The socio-cultural context here is Indian society. This area represents those performing arts that act as cultural symbols of the population at large. These performing arts pulsate with life but are slowly changing through the flux of time. During the past five decades or so, they have been widely recognized as viable tools to impart development messages among other things, both as live performances as also in integrated forms with other media of mass communication. Hence, they have come to be called ‘traditional folk media for communication’.

Communication plays an important role in the process of social and cultural transformation of any society. Therefore every society evolves its appropriate systems of communication to perform these functions. India with a large majority
of its people living in villages gave birth to many folk performing arts. According to Parmar (1975), “these performing arts are indigenous tools of communication. They cater to the rural folk communities in entertainment and education”.

Dissanayake (1977) observed that these folk media are not mere relics of the past, but active and highly functional cultural institutions performing functions vital to the well-being of society. They provide entertainment, disseminate information, inculcate socially accepted norms and values and perform a general socialising function. Thus, folk arts are part and parcel of society.

**Meaning and importance of communication:**

Interaction, interchange, dialogue, sharing, communion and commonness are ideas that crop up in any attempt to define the term ‘communication’. There are numerous definitions of communication, and there is yet no agreement on any single definition. One more functional definition of communication describes it as ‘the transfer or conveying of meaning’ and another definition says it is ‘the mechanism through which human relations exist and develop’, or ‘sharing of experience on the basis of commonness’. Communication is more than mere transferring or transmission of ideas or thoughts. It is not a static act, but a dynamic process of action and interaction towards a desired goal. Communication is therefore, a process of sharing or exchange of ideas, information, knowledge, attitude or feeling among two or more persons through certain signs and symbols.

Man’s need for communication is as strong and as basic as his need to eat, sleep and love. It is an individual and a social need. It is both a natural individual demand and a requirement of social existence to use communication resources in order to engage in the sharing of experiences, through symbol-mediated interaction.

Essentially, the primary function of communication is to inform, instruct/educate, entertain and influence/persuade people to make them function smoothly and effectively. Besides, communication has a secondary function to
perform as well; through debates and discussion, cultural promotion and integration, it fosters consensus, creativity and understanding among people, groups and societies so that they live in peace and harmony.

Mass communication and mass media:

Human beings are engaged in a variety of communication acts like intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication and mass communication. Although each type appears to have distinctive features, they are all much alike in the sense that one enters into a meaningful relationship with one or more persons by means of signs and symbols.

The intrapersonal communication is a process by which people either consciously or unconsciously communicate themselves on a verbal, non-verbal and a vocal level. Art of communicating, talking, writing within oneself is intrapersonal communication. The interpersonal communication is the universal form of communication that takes place between two individuals. Since it is person-to-person contact, it includes everyday exchanges that may be formal or informal and can take place anywhere by means of words, sounds, facial expression, gestures and postures. Because of face to face interaction it is an ideal and effective communication situation. The group communication is an extension of interpersonal communication where more than two individuals are involved in exchange of ideas, skills and interests. Groups provide an opportunity for people to come together to discuss and exchange views of common interest.

Outside the realm of interpersonal communication exists another form of communication, which involves communication with mass audience, and hence the name mass communication. The channels through which this kind of communication takes place are referred to as mass media. Both mass communication and mass media are generally considered synonymous for the sake of convenience. Mass communication is unique and different from interpersonal communication as it is evident from the following definition. 'Any mechanical
device that multiplies messages and takes it to a large number of people
simultaneously is called mass communication'. The media through which
messages are being transmitted include radio, television, newspapers, magazines,
books, films and more recently, satellite television, cable television and Internet.
They require large organisations and electronic devices to put across the messages.

Mass media are broadly divided into print media and electronic media. While the
print media are the oldest having a history of about five hundred years,
the electronic media are products of the 20th century technological revolution. All
media are expensive and need huge organisations to collect process, formulate and
disseminate information, views, entertainment and advertising to enormous,
scattered, heterogeneous audience simultaneously.

The mass media have assumed a significant place in our life. Individually
or collectively they serve the needs of various audience who have specific
preferences. Some audience want entertainment, sports news, films, plays, serials,
dance, music, etc. Others may have greater interest in news and views. Yet others
seek guidance to solve their socio-economic problems. Each medium is powerful
in its own right in serving people and each has gone through several stages of
development due to pressure and competition from newer communication
technologies.

Exaggerated claims have been made for the power of the mass media.
Daniel Lerner terms them 'mobility multipliers' and Wilbur Schramm considers
them to be 'magic multipliers'. Indeed both the terms 'mass communication' and
'mass media' are not quite functional in the context of developing societies. None
of the mass media reach the masses of people in these societies. So in every sense,
these are 'minority' or 'elite' media or even class media, for only those who have
the wherewithal can afford to purchase receivers for them. Newspapers,
transistors, films and television are still beyond the economic reach of the majority
of our people. The traditional community media like the Keerthana and
Yakshagana and the whole treasure house of folk song, folk dance and folk theatre
are the real organs of mass media in India. They are far less expensive organs, are easy of access, are frequently participatory in nature and communicate much more effectively than the electronic media, at a direct and personal level. Their reach too is far and wide in the country (Keval J. Kumar, 2000).

Meaning of folk arts:

Before defining folk arts, it is important to know the meaning of folklore, because it is a wider concept and folk art is a part of it. The term folklore was derived from the German *Volkslehre* (people’s customs). It has been used differently in different countries and at different times (Vidyarthi, 1978: 202). Anthropologists used the term synonymously for myths, legends, folktales, folk songs, proverbs, riddles and a variety of forms of artistic expressions whose medium is the spoken word. But ever since William Thoms coined the word ‘folklore’ in 1846, different authors and researchers offered different definitions of the term. Dorson (1976) observed that folklore outlined the hidden, forgotten and backward culture which was deep in remote places in a prehistoric past and in far off places away from the busy centres of civilisation in the peasant villages of the countryside and mountain ridges.

One of the famous folklorists, Bascom (1968: 496) defined folklore as, “folk learning which comprehends all knowledge that is transmitted by word of mouth and all crafts and techniques that are learned by imitation or examples as well as the products of these crafts”. Therefore, folklore, according to him, includes folk art, folk crafts, folk tools, folk costumes, folk customs, folk beliefs, folk medicine, folk recipes, folk music, folk dances, folk games, folk gestures and folk speech as well as those verbal forms of expression known as folk literature. Jawaharlal Handoo (1977), an Indian folklore researcher also confirmed the same definition.

However, communication scholars like H. K. Ranganath, Georgette Wang and Vimal Dissanayake offered different definitions from the angle of
communications. Ranganath (1980) described folk media as living expressions of the life style and culture of people evolved through the years. Wang and Dissanayake (1984) defined it as a communication system embedded in culture which existed much before the arrival of mass media and which still exists as a vital mode of communication in many parts of the world presenting a certain degree of continuity, despite changes”. In these two definitions, Ranganath’s argument is similar to Bascom’s (1968: 28) view, which holds that folklore is a part of culture. Because folklore is a part of humanity’s learned traditions and customs. It also formed as a part of its social heritage.

According to Bascom (1965: 279-290) folk media have four specific functions:

- Amusement is one of the chief function of folklore
- It plays in validating culture, in justifying its rituals and institutions to those who perform and observe them
- It is useful in the education of masses particularly in the non literate societies, and
- Some forms of folklore are important as a means of applying social pressure and exercising social control.

In almost all traditional societies, music, dance, drama and other modes of performing arts are so vitally related to religious rituals and forms of worship that they are considered to be of divine origin. Religious rituals achieve communication of one’s feelings to God and rousing of the emotions of devotion to affect the communion with the divine. Dance dramas like *Yakshagana* are still offered as worship in important shrines. (U.P. Upadhyaya and Sushila P. Upadhyaya, 1996)
Types of folk arts:

Different scholars have classified the folklore in different ways. But the basic types of folklore are as follows:

- Oral narratives-tales, legends, proverbs, jokes, riddles, anecdotes, oral poetry, toasts, signifying, sermons, personal experience narratives.
- Music and instruments-lullabies to highly polished song styles, penny whistles to tribal drums
- Material culture-the stuff of traditional culture, which includes for example, the following:
  - Architecture-barns, fences, outbuildings, houses
  - Crafts and decorative arts: baskets, quilts, coverlets, carvings, pottery, weaving, tool-making, furniture-making, needlework, home or yard decoration
  - Food ways-gathering, preserving, and preparing food
  - Beliefs-superstitions, weather lore, folk wisdom, remedies, prejudice, spirituality
  - Customs-group celebrations, holidays, calendar traditions, rituals, birthdays
  - Body communications-greetings, handshakes, dances, games, gestures (Barre Toelken, 1996, pp. 19-22)

Dorson classifies the folklore and folk life into four groups (1976: 2-5):

a) oral literature
b) material culture
c) social folk custom

d) performing folk arts.

Oral literature: This group includes spoken, sung and voiced forms of traditional utterance that show repetitive patterns. Hence folk narrative, folk song or folk poetry is a part of this category as it is propagated by word of mouth and is without known authorship.
Material culture: This is a visible part of folk behaviour that existed prior to and continues alongside mechanised industry. Material culture is a technique, skill, recipe and formulae transmitted across the generations and finds a place in the houses, cloths, food, etc., of the folk.

Social folk customs: In this grouping, group interaction is important rather than individual skills and performances. The customary practices of these people are seen during the births, deaths, marriages etc. the decorations of the houses are done to ward off evils. Certain games and recreations or sports and pastimes are learned of social folk custom cover the modes of worship and offering animals to appease the spirits and gods.

Performing folk arts: They involve the traditional use of music, dance and drama by adopting folk instruments, dance costumes and scenario props for the purpose of amusement. However, the performing folk arts also intermix with the formal performing arts. In this study importance is given to performing folk arts.

Folk arts as media of mass communication:

One of the areas of mass communication, the traditional or folk media can be revived and used as vehicles of effective social communication. Harikatha, puppet shows, street plays have evolved as people’s medium. Pradip N.Thomas (1996) observes, "Traditional forms of communication are part of a larger process related to the making and re-making of communities. They play a vital role in the process of negotiation that is itself a core element in the self-understanding and growth of traditional communities. This is an on-going process, but one that has become increasingly complex in the light of the politics of change. It is this complexity that traditional forms of communication endeavor to decipher and to make intelligible nothing more and nothing less”.

Folk drama, folk songs, folk tales, the repertoire of itinerant minstrels and musicians at festivals- all function as mass media. A priest narrating tales from the epics, a folk drama performer or even a funeral lament- all serve as media of mass
communication. In the absence of cinema or similar formal or commercial system of recreation in the village, these traditional media give people an opportunity to enjoy themselves.

Folk songs and lyrics are powerful means of propagating the ideas and experiences of the wise and learned to village people who cannot read and write. It is said that before independence, folk songs were used to push the nationalist message deep into the villagers’ minds, to communicate political ideas and information to people predominantly illiterate and isolated and to arouse the villagers to fight for freedom. Folk songs reflect the villagers’ spirit, emotions, culture and traditions and are become popular because they are composed in dialects and tunes that are familiar the villagers. (Paul Hartmann & others, 1989: 190-193)

The folk and traditional arts have been used for moral, religious and socio-political purposes. India has a long tradition of mass communication, especially oral communication and folk arts. The folk art, typical of the tribal and rural life all over the world, is the spontaneous expression of the people shaped by them, to suit their own needs. More than 2500 years back in India, the religious leaders likes Buddha and Mahavira made use of the language of the people in order to preach their religion to the masses. Thereafter the art of telling stories of god (Harikatha) developed so that the rural masses could be educated with respect to the subtle concepts of religion and social values. This is the reason why we have a unique phenomenon in India that the illiterate peasants are familiar with the fundamental tenets of Hinduism, Buddhism Jainism etc. In the following centuries throughout the country, there were such attempts through the Bhakti movement by great leaders and philosophers.

In the present century, Mahatma Gandhi possibly the greatest mass communicator of all times aroused millions of illiterate people to participate in the freedom struggle against the mighty empire through oral communication. He inspired to use other traditional media of entertainment such as songs, dramas,
puppets and other folk arts for spreading the messages especially in the rural areas. Though there is a tendency of viewing the folk media as outmoded, unchanging and extremely rigid form of mass media, it is far from the truth. Although the basic form and the structure of the various folk art forms have changed very slightly over the centuries, the messages conveyed have always moved with the times or rather have been contemporary.

There has been a phenomenal growth in media of mass communication after independence. However, at the time of crisis and national event like elections, the traditional ways and means of communication have proved their importance. The Indian government being aware of the fact always tried to make use of small and alternate media for the purpose of development. For publicising development schemes under the five-year plans, so as to motivate the people to participate, programme called the Integrated Publicity Programme was launched in 1953. In the following years the sister organisation namely, Song and Drama Division was started for organising entertainment programmes with the help of local theatrical group or parties of local or folk artists. The other popular media in other regions were also combined. They are printed words, exhibitions, photographs, puppet shows and dance dramas.

The selection of the media depends on the message and the characteristics of the audience. The occasions such as fairs and festivals are utilised to gather the people for the performances and displays. The Song and Drama Division of Indian Government functions at the three levels, at it's headquarter in New Delhi, at eight regional centres in various parts of the country and nine sub-centres at the district headquarters. The Division has departmental troupes, sound and light units and more than 400 registered parties, which are made up of eminent performers in the folk arts. During 1991, it presented thousands of programmes all over the country as it was mentioned in the Annual report of 1991-92.

The Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) is a multimedia agency, which produces material for macro as well as micro media.
The specialised service is being offered in areas of exhibitions, designing and printing booklets, folders, posters, hoarding banners and kiosks etc. The important themes being covered are national integration, communal harmony, health and family welfare, girl child and prevention of drug abuse etc. Other departments such as National Saving Organisation, Life Insurance Corporation, Health and Family Welfare etc use the traditional and alternate media.

**Folk arts and mass media:**

The relationship between traditional folklore and modern media is generally perceived as contradictory. Modern media are supposed to have displaced traditional folklore from its role as the prime means of entertainment. While this is often factually true, it is time to explore any other aspects of the relationship between folklore and media.

In the fields of recording, archiving and dissemination media have played a revolutionizing role in the history of folklore. It has become possible to record an oral narration far more authentically than could ever be expected. Audio recordings also make it possible for others to hear the sound of the narrators, their language and the ambience of narration. Visual documentation makes it possible to give identity beyond borders to artists known within their local region.

Media as entertainment industry is the sphere where the relationship between folklore and media has tended to be a problematic one. Films and television have both used traditional folklore and also transformed them in the process. Advertisements too use narratives, songs, themes and characters from folklore for absolutely new purposes. The fact that traditional folklore does not have any copyrights has often become the basis for its free interpretation and representation. The use of folklore by media has also contributed to its popularity beyond traditional boundaries.

Yet another aspect is the relationship of performing folk artists to modern media. How do they deal with the competition provided by the media? Their
current performances show the influence and usage of media, which often considered impurity by folklore scholars. Could this not be seen as an ongoing process in the ever-changing history of folklore itself? The traditional folk artists seem to have lost out although media to great success often uses their arts. Wherein lie the reasons for this in the relative powerless position of folk artists in society with regards to education, urbanity and financial resources? (Indian Folk life Journal October 2004: p4). These questions should be seriously looked into.

As popular films, advertisements, comic books and films, popular music, popular designs, folk cartoons, etc., deliberately use folklore materials, the consumer goods also use folk motifs, folk language, and folklore characteristics to seek recognition from the consumers and thereby promote their sale. Magazines, radio, and television advertising frequently use folklore metaphors, symbols, designs, motifs, and related ideas to popularize or boost the modern industrial products and thus have become an important part of mass culture. Appeal to purity and originality is made in the advertisements using folklore, illustrating feminine charm and feminine duties, the traditional values followed in Indian communities.

In general, the resurgence in preserving and celebrating ethnic and linguistic identities and celebrating the traditions and history has resulted in a close link between mass culture, advertising and folklore in India. The advertising agencies are, therefore, forced to use folk elements/ functions in their advertisements to attract the public in general and non-literate in particular. The language plays an important role in this respect. The direct and indirect forms appeared in the advertisements are derived mainly from the folk elements. Folk media establishes direct rapport with audience owing to its proximity with the community. The characteristics of folk media defined by Crawford and Rony Adhikarya are found in the functions of advertising also. Advertisers have found it profitable to use folk music, folk elements and folk functions along with an appropriate choice of language in almost all the advertisements in the magazines, radio and television (Sandhya Nayak, 2004). The folk arts are used in mass media
for other than advertising purposes also. In most of circumstances, the part of folk arts or some elements are used instead of using folk arts comprehensively.

**Folk media in India:**

In India, as elsewhere in most developing nations, folklore was, for a long time, a pet child of the politician, who wanted to arouse in the people a pride for their own past and culture, and an identity consciousness. Mass communication experts began to notice that the interest in folklore, a medium of entertainment that continued to survive through the ages, could be easily used to communicate contents to help advance social programmes.

The mobility of preachers, pilgrims, traders, craftsmen, *sadhus* and travellers facilitated and helped disseminate news and promote the exchange and interaction of religions, cultures, crafts and fine arts. Because of their mobility, inter-regional communication, social and cultural interaction and marketing of goods and ideas could be facilitated. This information not only promoted communication and trade but also forged links of cultural unity in the country (Malhan 1985:18). Religious leaders like Buddha, Mahavira, Shankaracharya, Nanak and Samartha Ramdas used *Kathas*, devotional songs, epics and recitations to disseminate their messages. Along with this mode of communication, people used a wide range of traditional or folk media forms to transmit messages and to educate people.

These media having roots in native culture, embedded in the local identity and social values besides providing mass entertainment helped Indian society as indigenous tools of interpersonal, inter-group and inter-village communication for ages. In the course of time, various regions developed specialised regional folk media like *Tamasha* of Maharashtra, *Jatra* of Bengal, *Sawal Jawab* of Uttar Pradesh, *Yakshagana* of Karnataka and *Harikatha* or *Burrakatha* of Andhra Pradesh. These traditional media with hundreds of performing artists acted as
communication channels for heralding reform, social change and development in Indian society. (Malhan, 1985:20; Parmar, 1975; Melkote, 1991)

The oral tradition in India has been the live wire to transmit knowledge flow of various aspects of history, philosophy, tradition, and skill and to bring in social changes. The intangible tradition cuts across the disciplines of dance and music as well as of informal social practices. The appeal of Kashmiri Bethaks or Patiabaji of Bhopal cannot be matched with the modern coffeehouses. People gathered together and over a cup of tea shared their views on current issues. Such gatherings generated opinions, constructively evaluated individuals and state initiatives and often made or marred political leaders.

Slightly formalised form of dialogue among the masses came in the form of moving folk theatres like the Nautankis of north India. These theatres romanticised the dreams and aspirations of the common man, thereby relieving the society of hypertension and frustration. Another tradition, which flourished in every state of India, was that of storytelling in fascinating ways. Some popular ones that are on their last leg are the Pattaru katha tradition of telling stories from ancient scroll Jatakas in Andhra Pradesh, the Harikatha and the Kalakshepam in Tamil Nadu and the visually powerful narratives from the scroll painting of Devanarayana in Rajasthan.

Storytelling was complimented with fascinating puppets. Puppetry has not been the prerogative of any particular community and was therefore used widely across the country in temples, at religious celebrations, festivals or marriages. Even in performance based on mythological stories, contemporary characters were brought in with great ease. Through their humour, wit and banter, they made significant observations and remarks on social issues. Today, for some extent, electronic media has dislodged the folk art performers and the traditional folk theatres and other folk art forms.
Folk media in Karnataka:

Karnataka State has different traditional folk art forms and traditions with variety of themes, subtlety of thought and wide range of human interest. Each form is distinct from another and rivals in creative thought. The folk art forms of Karnataka can be studied as folk music forms, folk dances, folk theatres and other folk art forms.

Folk songs in Kannada have varied tradition of their own throughout Karnataka. The devotional songs, grinding songs, pounding songs, lullabies, nursery rhymes, dance songs, work songs, wedding songs, puberty songs, praise songs and many other classes of songs are being studied by the researchers. The popular song traditions like Kalgi Tura, Gee Gee, Konthipuja, Moon ritual, Antige Pantige, Bhagavathike, Sampradaya padagalu, Koravanjis etc. have their own stock of songs (Suryanath Kamath, 1982, p.914). Folk music forms are identified with folk singers. There are mainly two types of folk singers that are professional singers who sing for their livelihood and ballad singers. Professional singers are characterised by traditional, colourful costumes and conspicuous musical instruments. Professional singers are classified into professional religious singers and professional secular singers.

Professional religious singers narrate/sing only those songs which concern their chosen Gods, pilgrim centres and temples, for example, Kamsale, Neelagaru, Chowdike, Gorava and Gane. Secular singers do not belong to any religious sect and do not sing the songs of a specific religious sect, for example, Karapala, Dombidasa, Helava, Kinnari Jogis and Tamburis. Based on the format, the musical tradition of ballads in Karnataka has been divided into two categories. They are field ballads or Bayalu Lavani and mela ballads of Mela Lavani/Gee Gee songs.

A large variety of folk dances constitute an essential part of rural life in Karnataka. Based on the content and purpose, folk dances of Karnataka are categorised as religious and secular dances. Religious dances belong to particular
religious sect. It has three types namely, dances of Shaiva tradition like Nandi Dhvaja, Lingada Berana, Gorava dance, Veeragase, Beesu Kamsale and Puravanthike, dances of Vaishnava cult like Bhagavanthike, Pata Kunitha and Banadevara Kunitha and dances of Shakti cult like Mariammana Kunitha, Urimarammana Kunitha, Puja, Karaga, Dollu, Somana Kunitha, Harige, Sedere, Bhootharadane, Nagaradane, Kombat and Billat. Secular dances provide entertainment, for example, Kolata, Chit Mela, Maragalu Kunitha, Chenmu Kunitha, Lion dance, Tiger dance and others. People like Kodava, Koraga, Kudubi, Halakki Okkaliga, Siddhis, Gowli, Lambani and others have their own dance forms.

Folk theatre forms like Hagarana, Jalata, Yakshagana, Talamaddale, Moodalapaya Bayalata, Doddata, Puppetry, Sannata, Dasarata, Radhanata, Sharanarata and Shrikrishna Parijata are also existed in Karnataka. Amidst the amazing variety of traditional art forms of Karnataka, Harikatha, a religious discourse enjoys the patronage of both rural and urban people. In the state, the art regained its past glory and even attained international stature with active involvement of highly reputed scholars like Bhadragiri Keshavadas and his brothers. The state has other folk art forms like folk tales, riddles, folk medicines and others.

**Traditional folk media in Coastal Karnataka:**

Coastal Karnataka is an important region in the State of Karnataka. This is a multilingual region where people often speak two or more languages with proficiency. The people of this region have preserved their distinguished culture and language as obvious in their distinctness. Because of the geographical barriers of the Western Ghats separating this zone from the neighbouring Dravidian communities, the sector has preserved certain socio-cultural and linguistic features, which the other Dravidian groups seem to have lost in great measure.
Coastal Karnataka is a treasure house of conventional performing arts. Some of the common folk media forms of this region are Yakshagana, Talamaddale, Gombeyata (puppetry), Harikatha and the like. Practices such as spirit worship, Naga worship, folk musical forms such as Sandi, Paddana, Kabitha, Uralu, Madipu, folk dance forms like Aati Kalenja, Karangolu, Jogi Kunitha, Purusha Vesha, etc. are commonly found in undivided Dakshina Kannada District. Likewise, folk art forms like Antige–Pantige, Kolata, Suggi Kunitha, Karadi Kunitha, Pugudi Kunitha, Dollu Kunitha, etc. are common in Uttara Kannada District. The distinctive feature of this region is that every major religion, caste, and dialect has its own folk media forms for communication. Some of the folk art forms are explained below.

**Folk theatre:**

The folk theatre is an expression of creative urge of the people. It belongs to regional and local traditions. It has flourished as an entertainment form. The folk theatre in India has been associated with the social and cultural needs of the rural communities. It has been offering repeated opportunities to sharpen their talent as expressive agents of socio-economic milieu of their communities. The folk theatre groups are mostly composed of enthusiasts who perform in neighbouring villages besides their local presentation. The Yakshagana is a popular folk theatre form of Coastal Karnataka. It is discussed at the end of this chapter. Other folk theatre forms are:

**Puppetry:**

*Yakshagana Gombeyata* or Puppet show is an art form of this region. This is presented using string puppets and rod puppets with colourful costumes and dresses. The movements of the dolls are monitored and controlled by strings and rods. *Yakshagana* is presented through puppets and hence it is known as *Yakshagana Gombeyata*. Puppets made out of wood are painted and dressed
according to the character in the story. *Gombeyata* is controlled from a curtain chamber specially put up behind the seen for the purpose. Musical instruments are also used just as that of *Yakshagana*. Different puppets enact different characters in accordance with the story telling by way of dialogue followed with songs. It is fundamental for the puppeteers to learn the rudiments of *Yakshagana* dance with implicit adherence to *tala* and *laya* (beat and rhythm) and song in the *Tara sthaayi* (upper octave).

Now puppetry has gone through major transitions and many *Gombeyata* troupes have disbanded while those that remain perform infrequently. Temple festivals, a customary venue, do not offer enough work and troupes seek institutional support from urban folk festivals, folk art research schools, political or community organisations, international festivals and mass media. In seeking this patronage, puppeteers modify their art: dances, dialogue, and narration are shortened; shows are presented in public halls rather than temples; electronic sound and lighting are introduced.

*Harikatha:*

An ancient practice of propagating the *Bhakti* cult, *Harikatha* is associated with the Hindu pantheon. It is essentially a religious discourse encompassing spiritual advises aimed at touching the conscience of the people. It may be defined as a versatile and composite art in which a single person indulges in the act of dramatization, consisting of all the vital components of the theatre craft such as music, dance and dramatic presentation of the themes.

A solo recitation, *Harikatha*, excludes spiritual expression. It is a combination of literature and lilting lyrics, which reflects rich musical and literary material in its content. The staging of *Harikatha* does not require extravagant arrangements. It is a theatre craft with a difference and does not require a stage, set, scenery, costumes and other paraphernalia. As a result it can be staged in any place with least preliminary preparations.
The principal performer is the chief singer narrator of the story and is called Dasa or Keerthankar. Few artists in the background to give him a vocal support accompany him. They play musical instruments like the Mridanga, theTabla, the violin, the harmonium and the cymbals while the Keerthankar plays castanets. In the absence of any rigid rules, many a time, it is not surprising that even a single artist successfully manages to stage the entire show keeping the audience throughout fully engrossed in the discourse (Usharani, 1996). Because of its flexibility any message can be propagated through Harikatha. Many such attempts were done on that direction.

**Hoovina Kolu:**

It is a special art form found in undivided Dakshina Kannada district. Budding artists during Shravana perform it. It has a maddale and a decorated stick. During Navarathri, sitting face-to-face boys perform this. There is no dance, only song and its meaning. Now it is disappearing.

Another folk theatre form existed in Uttara Kannada is Chapparada Yakshagana. It resembles Yakshagana with some differences. In this folk theatre two or three stairs are created as platform to play the story like Iravatha, Thrishanku Swarga and others. It is performed once or twice a year.

**Folk dance:**

Primarily a folk dance is a dance of masses, the ordinary, unsophisticated class of people. A folk dance differs from a classical dance in that the former functions as part of religious activity displaying a simple mood and atmosphere. It does not aim at perfection either in style or body movements and appeals to human emotions rather than the intellect. The Bhuta Kola is a popular religious folk dance form of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts and Suggi dance is of Uttara Kannada district. They are discussed at the end of the chapter. Other folk dance forms existed in this area are:
**Tiger Dance:**

*Pilitha Vesha* or the popular tiger dance is part and parcel of the cultural fabric of undivided Dakshina Kannada. The person involved in this dance has to possess the graceful movements of the tiger. It is said that the origin of this tradition can be traced back to almost 700–800 years when tigers roamed free in the jungles of India. The English engaged in widespread game hunting of tigers. This led to a sharp decrease in the tiger population. To protest this atrocity, the people of this region developed a dance where humans dressed up like tigers. In this dance, the actors usually play the roles of tigers, cubs and the *Dorai* (Englishman). The *Dorai* armed with a gun is the killer. The dance always projects the tigers as victors over the *Dorai*. It is an expression of the people’s concern to save and protect the tiger.

One more fascinating aspect is that the way they paint their bodies. All the body hair is removed and colours are gingerly used to highlight the aspects of a tiger. The hair of sheep is then stuck to the face, the whiskers are neatly drawn and the eyes are given a bright glow. The combined effect is really startling. Today, the tiger dance has lost its fervour and is fast changing its form. Dancers perform mostly if there are sponsorships and attractive cash rewards. Participation has decreased alarmingly with just 15–20 groups getting their act together. The use of different bands, film music and a whole new bag of tricks like lifting coins, bank notes and throwing a sack of rice are some of the recent additions to this ancient folk form. The veterans involved in this spectacular tradition hope that they will keep it alive for many years to come.

**Siri:**

The performance of *Siri* cult is also popular in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts (Claus 1975, 1986). Its annual ceremonies take place in about 15-20 locations of this Tulu-speaking region. During the rituals up to a thousand or more women and men come and get possessed by the category of spirits called the
The Siri spirits are usually said to be seven in number, all females except male character Kumara. The story associated with these spirits is traditionally recounted in a woman's oral narrative genre called paddana. Like many others in the genre, the song narrates the earthly lives of the spirits as part of a particular matrilineal family. It takes some 6-8 hours to recite.

The bulk of the ritual at the annual ceremonies consists of what might be called cases of spirit investigation. The first timers, mostly young women are brought to the Siri festival because they have been experiencing a condition, which has been diagnosed as spirit possession. Since this takes place in their homes and can be embarrassing and disruptive, it is regarded as undesirable. During the rituals such cases are dealt with, one at a time, through an investigation with the young woman and her family. Kumara leads the investigations with the assistance of one or more of the Siri spirits. The process normally involves getting the young woman into a state of possession and then inquiring into the identity of the spirit and reason for giving trouble to the girl and her family. At the end of each case the spirit in the young woman is expected to identify itself and reveals the reason for intruding on the lives of the family. The family promises to meet whatever demands the spirit might be making.

In the Siri performance, the dialogue between Kumara and the Siri takes place in a singsong speech style. Some of Kumara's discourse uses fragments of the Siri paddana, but most of it is impromptu (sung) speech. Meanwhile, a woman who is possessed by one of the Siri spirits may be reciting various episodes from the paddana, either alone or with another woman. Many, however, merely repeat phrases and line fragments or even just utter hissing and deep guttural breathing sounds associated with a state of possession. At any one time, all of this may be going on simultaneously, producing a cacophony of many spirit voices. In some places, the girls, Abbaga and Daraga sit at opposite ends of a Chenne game-board with Kumara between them. All three are possessed, their persona that of the spirits. The girls wear white saris. Kumara wears a red silk waistcloth. They
commence to sing *paddana*. Having the myth recited by the women, the performance sets the mythological scene for the ensuing ritual activities and establishes the *Siri* myth as the referential script for the rituals. Now this performance is decreasing. The devotees just give offerings to temple without performing it.

**Sonada Jogi:**

The *Jogi* comes in a red-coloured dress. He wears *sirihara*, a garland made out of coconut leaves. The red coloured face pack and the *kajal* around his eyelashes with marks of moon and sun on his forehead and a triangular shape on the cheek calls for everyone's attention. He keeps a stick in his right hand and a bell in the left. A decorated crown (*benchavari*) and tiny bells on legs makes him a complete *Jogi*. It is during the month of *Sona* that one can find *Jogi* visiting houses in this region. *Sona (Shravana)*, the month full of festivals comes after the *Aati (Ashadha)* month. People believe that the *Aati* month is not an ideal time to take up any noble deed. Hence the festive season starts with the *Sona* month. It is during this time that the *Jogi* appears and dances before every house with his companion, who beats *tembare*, a musical instrument used in *Bhuta Kola*. The companion and the *Jogi* converse during their dance and receive gifts from the house owner and move on to other houses.

Male members of the Nalke community in some parts of Dakshina Kannada perform the *Jogi* ritual. The songs of *Jogi* dance are in the form of a conversation, which explains the birth of *Jogi*, his childhood, his rambling briefly. The performers believe that Shiva was in disguise as *Jogi* during the *Brahmakapala*. Then he gave his costume to his students and blessed them a long life, which they had to spend telling the stories of Pandavas to the people. *Jogi* artists also believe that they are the disciples of Arjuna. According to the existing songs on *Jogi Purusha*, *Jogi* was originally from Kashi, who came to Tulunadu after visiting Moodabidre, Adur, Madhur, Buleri and Permale and went to the
Kalpura temple. Today it is also disappearing, because the artists have inferiority complex.

**Kudubi Holi:**

Kudubis are a tribal group found in Udupi and Uttara Kannada district. They speak mixed Marathi dialect. Being a tribal group the men folk perform the Holi dance and songs during the Holi festival. They decorate themselves with a turban and wear wild flowers called abbalige and hold gummate. While beating the gummate, the men folk dance in circle. The Holi dancers go in groups and dance in front of homes and receive some kind of reward. The collected money and grains are used for the grand festival on the Holi day. It is also performed by Marathi Naiks of Udupi. It takes place in the month of March. All Marathis and Kudubis observe this important festival. The kith and kin join together before the chief’s house or in front of the temple to start the performance and also to end the performance. It is like Halakki Saggi Kunitha with some differences in dress and dance.

**Aati Kalenja:**

*Aati Kalenja* is a ritualistic folk dance performed by the Nalke community in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi. *Kalenja* is the name of a minor spirit, who is in charge of the protection of the village folk during the Tulu month of Aati when the other major spirits take leave for rest. During this period the members of the Nalke community dress themselves with tender coconut leaves, wear anklets, cover their heads with long cap made of areca spathe etc., and paint their face with various colours and designs. The performer holds an umbrella made of leaves and goes door-to-door dancing in front of each house. The other members of the group sing the story of the spirit and beat tembare. The householder gives them paddy, rice, coconut, turmeric, charcoal and the dancers perform certain rituals to ward off disease and other misfortunes from the family. Today folk dance is also disappearing like *Sonada Jogi.*
Karangolu:

*Karangolu* is a kind of harvest dance of joy and merriment. It is also a kind of prayer for prosperity through harvest. During the month of February-March after the second harvest on the full moon day of the season, the members of the Harijan community dress themselves like women, old men etc., perform this dance. They paint their body with white colour and wear anklets, deck themselves with areca flowers, leaves and beads. The two artists who hold stick in hand are dancing with singing songs and others beat a drum. There are about four to five members in a group. They go with dancing from house to house at night receiving alms from the people of village.

Madira:

*Madira* is the dance of women belonging to the Bhuta impersonator's community. During the rainy seasons the members of this community are free from their traditional profession of *Bhuta performance*. Hence the women go from house to house dancing and singing accompanied by the beating of *tembare*. One woman sings and beats the *tembare* while the other woman, usually the younger one dances. The song usually describes the beauty of the woman, her love and ultimately her marriage to a handsome man. It is disappearing now.

Mahankali Kunitha:

It is found in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts. Nalke or Panara community during Diwali performs it. They start their performance at home of *Gutti* or *Boodu* and go to all homes. For their performance people give them rice, oil, salt and chilly as gift. One dancer covers his face with spathe of arecanut, which is designed with eye, nose, mouth and tongue of white, yellow, black, green and red colours. He ties many saris to his waist and wears a long shirt and *gaggara* in his leg. One sari is spread on his back. They don't tie mask to face, but keep in front of face by hand.
The singer sings paddana of Mahankali, the goddess by playing tembare and the dressed artist dance according to that song. It is believed that to get away diseases Mahankali comes from Ghats. Another folk art Aati Kalenja is also coming for same purpose. The dance will end on the day of Tulasi puja. On that day they offer paddy, rice, oil, coconut, salt, turmeric and chilly to the Goddess by putting them in front of Goddess Mahankali photo and request to get away all diseases. Then they drop their masks on river. While performing the artist should not go beyond the limit of his area. Like Suggi Kunitha, he should visit homes in order of importance. If he disobeys it he should offer coconut to Goddess as fine. It is performed only in daytime not in night. Now artists are visiting only important houses of village during the days of Diwali festival.

**Nagamandala:**

In Tulunadu serpent worship is performed in variety of ways like Nagamandala, Dhakke Bali, Panarata, Sarpankala and Kadyanata. Nagamandala is an existing popular artistic religious folk dance form. It is an offering to Naga, the Serpent God. It is called Nagamandala because of mandala made out of five colours. Brahmin priest, Nagapathri and Naganarthaka perform it. The purpose of arranging Nagamandala is to get children and to get away diseases like leprosy. It is identified as fertility offering by psychologists.

There are different mandalas like full mandala means 16 sacred ties and 14 head snakes, half mandala means eight sacred ties and seven head snakes and quarter mandala means four sacred ties and five head Nagas. There is yellow colour on border of mandala and snake is drawn in middle with red, black, yellow, white and green colours. Tender coconut, flower of coconut, arecanut, peanut and fruits are kept around mandala. After offering puja Nagapathri gets avesha and Vaidya sings song by playing Dakke. One Vaidya with make up of Ardhanarishwara dances with Nagapathri and another one make them dance. There is only song and dance, no talk.
Panara Swami Kola and Nagana Kola:

They are performed as part of Panarata. They are found only in Kundapura and Udupi taluks of Udupi District. The Panarata is like Nagamandala, but performed by Panaras, a scheduled caste community. It is organised by Nadavas or Bunts as an offering during night. The performance of Panarata starts with Swamikola. The dress and make up of Panara is like that of Vaidya in Nagamandala who sings praising songs. Another artist with dress like that of Yakshagana character, dances in this performance. It is Swamikola performance. The artist tells about background of Naga. Nagakola is like Swamikola, but in Nagakola, instead of offering prayer to Swami, offerings are made to Naga.

Sarpankala:

It is a part of Bhagavathi fair. It is found in Kanila, Ullala, Padattur and other places. It is performed in front of Bhagavathi temple. The pathri of Bhagavathi dances on mandala. After the performance, devotees collect colour dust as prasada.

Kadynata:

Kadya is God of Mera Harijanas living in undivided Dakshina Kannada district. Kadya means King Cobra. There are two types of houses like Aatada Kadyana mane (House of sporting King Cobra) and Mundu Kadyana mane (House of King Cobra). Kadyanata is performed only in Aatada Kadyana mane, which is far away from inhabitants in forest. It is complex of many Gods like Swami, Brahma, Yakshi, Ullalthi, Bobbarya, Jattinga, Manthraguliga, Panjurli, Kalkuda, Netterguliga etc. Some expect sathvika puja and others blood offering. It is performed in months of March and April. It starts on Saturday night and ends on midnight of Tuesday. It has practices like beginning, Muhurtada Kamba, Arasu Prahasana, Mandala writing, games, Kola Bali, Jakkiniyaranna Kunisuvudu, Kalasa Pooje, Potla Aaduvudu, Hagaranas etc.
**Panarata:**

It is a kind of *Bhuta* worship performed in Kannada speaking places of Udupi district. It reflects *Bhuta* worship in song, dance, dress and sacrifice of animals. It is a combination of *Kola, Genda, Dakke Bali* performed by Panaras. It is performed in night in front of *gudi* where wood images of *Daivas* are kept. In this performance every *Bhuta* is worshipped individually. *Bhuta* starts to talk in Tulu and then changes its language. While dancing, the artists sing background story of every *Daiva*. Offerings are made to *Daivas*.

**Kase Kunitha:**

It is called *Puravanthike* in North Karnataka. It is found in South Karnataka. In these performances artists wear red *kase panche*, red jubba and a red headgear. A *chouli* in back head, sword in right hand and a *halage* in left hand, red colour to face, silver *gaggara* to waist and *gejje* to leg. It is performed during festivals like *Shivarathri, Navarathri, Karthika* and occasions like marriage, opening ceremony etc. The *tamate, nagari, tase, pakkavadya* are musical instruments played in this performance. The artists dance first and then say *Kataki* or *Khadga* that relate to murder of Dakshabrahma and other stories.

**Moharam Kunitha:**

*Alayi* dance is an amalgamation of action and dexterous footwork, supported by appropriate devotional theme. Performed as part of ‘Moharam’ festival, *Alayi Hejje* provides a favourable forum for accomplishing the much-needed communal amity in this much-diversified society. As a semi-religious dance of Muslim community, it is a classic illustration of harmony between the two predominant communities of India, the Hindus and the Muslims. Jointly performed by both Muslims and Hindus, the presentation in it consists of performers dancing around a fire pit. It appears like a rope dance with 20 to 25 dancers holding identical ropes, which are hung from bamboo poles. The dancers
form circle and dance around the pole artistically winding and unwinding the ropes like plaits.

Antige Pantige:
It is performed during Diwali festival in some parts of Uttara Kannada. The communities of Deevaru, Lingayats, Bunts, Okkaligas and Haralas participate in it. All people of village with singers, Deepawalas, Deevatigewalas and money collectors visit home-to-home singing songs. People have to give kanike to them. Their dress is kachche panche, jubba or shirt and a headgear. The leader of the group carries lamp fire to light the lamp of home where they visit. They perform throughout night for a week or more.

Holi Halabu dance:
It is Holi celebration of Gonda community of Shimoga and Uttara Kannada. It is celebrated for two nights and one day. There are about 14 members with dakke in a group. The dress includes red headgear, flowers and colour panche to waist, silver chain and kalkdaga to leg. There are two jokers and no song. During Shivarathri they go to home-to-home performing this art and get remuneration.

Kolata:
The folk dance, which is entertainment to the core, is Kolata, the popular Dravidian stick dance. Widespread all over the state, Kolata is a kind of valour dance involving groups of people who indulge in bending, swaying and jumping activities to the tune of rhythmic clashing of sticks. With two sticks in hand each dancer can strike in various patterns and rhythms. There is considerably more flexibility in the pattern of dancing so also singing. It has become aradane in tribal people of Dakshina Kannada and Uttara Kannada. The Halakki Gowda community of Uttara Kannada excels in this art. With traditional dress artists make up face with red colour and wear a headgear, long shirt, red cloth to waist and gejje to leg. Some men wear sari or skirt. Sticks are decorated. There are different
types in Kolata. Among them Jade Kolata and Gopu Kolata are popular in Uttara Kannada. Flexibility and mobility in structure and content characterise Kolata, also considered as a popular rural sport. A close scrutiny of its content reveals that riddles figure more frequently in the content and ballads also form an integral part of the narration in many performances. (Usharani 1996, p.62)

*Tarle Kunitha:*

It is a performing art of Halakki Okkaliga women usually found in Honnavar, Kumta, Gokarna, Ankola and Karwar. It is performed when there is no rain. Women dance with their traditional dress. They stand in round shape. A person sings a song and others join with her. They call Tal Tarle. Some say Dumsalyo Dumsale. So it is called Dumsale dance also. In olden days women were going to hill and making naked dance. Other specialities are mock marriage and Bidira Hindu Naduve (in middle of bamboo).

*Erukola:*

At one time, this folk art has spread all over Dakshina Kannada. But now, it has been disappeared. It is an animal related dance. It is performed at houses of Guttu and Boodu. It is performed after harvest usually in December. It is also performed during death ritual and Kambala by Koragas.

*Kangeelu:*

It is found in some parts of Udupi and Mangalore Taluks and performed by Mundala and Godda communities. It is performed to improve plantation and remove diseases. It starts on full moon day of May and continues day and night for several days. As a religious dance it praises Mariamma. Artists wear arecanut spathe. After offering prayer to Mariamma, artists start to make up. First they dance in front of Mari Gudi and then go to home to home. The group contains 5-14 artists. They wear lungi, shirt, headgear, coconut thiri to waist and neck. Some keep thiri around the head. They dance in circle with music of dolu or tase. Singer
sings songs with beating bell. There is a horse character. In some group there is Koraga character instead of horse. In some parts of Udupi women also participate in it. Now the original Kangeelu dance is disappearing, but some youth practice it for competitions.

**Kudure Kola:**

It is found in Puttur, Bantwal and Sullia taluks of Dakshina Kannada district. Nalke community performs it. As a religious folk art it is usually performed before the starting of harvest. The ritual of preparing field for sowing is called Kandada Kori. Then Pookare is installed. Before that Kudure Kola is performed. It is usually arranged in December.

*Kudure Kola* means Naga (serpent) coming on Kudure (horse). Kandada Kori is done in Bakimar field, which is near to Nagabana. It is Kola of Nagabrahma. The artist makes his make up like Naga on horse at Nagabana. It resembles Keelu Kudure. Urava who follows with a chati accompanies him. After oddolaga, an initial dance Nagabrahma leaves Nagabana and takes a round of Bakimar field. Urava follows him. Tembarewala is also with him. He dances as horse dance. There is no literature. He acts according to music of tembare.

**Chennu Nalike:**

The Mera community of Dakshina Kannada performs this dance. It starts with Suggi Hunnime and lasts for five to nine days. It has two characters that are Chennu and Koraga. Chennu has dress of woman with Sampige flower on head. It is performed in night. Men and women help in background music. They sing Paddanas. There is a belief that when Chennu Kunitha is going on Siddavesha should not come in front. If they come face-to-face struggle will arise.

**Houndarayana Valaga:**

It is found in Kundapur taluk of Udupi district. It is performed during Tulasi Puja and Dakke Bali as a religious folk art. During Karthika month people
decorate Tulasi Katte and keep two lamps and photo of any God in name of Tirupathi Timmappa in front of it. After offering puja, the Yajamana asks Konike Mela to do Valaga.

There are five or six pairs of artists who wear red kachche, an inner shirt or bare body and a red headgear. Dance starts with Ganesha Shruthi. The songs are like stories. They have inner parts like Valagada Sandhi, Mane Yajamanana Sandhi and Kodangi Sandhi. It is like Kolata where one sings and others support by saying Houndarayana Valaga. At the end of performance, one acts as monkey.

Madimmaya Madimmal dance:

It is found in Tulunadu from second week of March to second week of April (Mayi Hunnime to Suggi Hunnime). It is a dance of Parava community. It is found in Puttur, Bantwal and Belthangady Taluks. It means bride and bridegrooms. They go to homes and dance. People give money, rice and paddy. They distribute themselves. They dance within village. It is also a fertility art.

Balesanthu:

It is a form of community dance mainly performed by the tribal community called Marathis or Naikas. In the past this kind of dance was quite common in the areas up to Coorg, Sullia, Puttur, Bantwal and Kasargod taluks. Today traces of this dance form can be seen only in the Vittal region of Bantwal taluk and in the Bakilapadavu village of Kasargod taluk.

This dance is performed as a rule between the 10th day of the Mayi month in the Tulu calendar and the full moon day of the same month. At the first day night the priest carries out the preliminaries for the dance and installs a stone, which symbolises Lord Eshwara or Lord Bhairava. The swastik is drawn in name of Lord Ganapathi and dhupa is offered as worship. By this time all the dancers, duly dressed in the traditional costume arrive and stand before the stone. They sing Balesanthu song and go round the stone. The dancers repeat the refrain baal
baalyoo Balesanthu and take three rounds. They proceed to temple and perform dance by way of offering puja and then visit houses of village.

There are about 15 to 20 members with characters like Koraga, Korappolu, Sanyasi, priest, Bhuta, assistants, a sooth-sayer, a monkey trickster and a city dweller, Muslim characters and others. The dance lasts for about half an hour and the owner of home places gifts in a basket. The dance troupe, which has performed throughout the night, comes at daybreak near an Indian poison -nut tree on the village border and breaks up for the day. Exclusively the members of Marathi community perform it. There is a similar folk art called Purusha Puje, which is jointly organised by members of all communities in Karkala and Belthangady Taluks. In Purusha Puja, instead of the Balesanthu song, Dimmisale song is recited.

Gondolu:

It is known by different names like Gondolu Puje, Panjida Puje, Amnura Puje, Angare Puje etc. The names differ according to the special features of the ritual. The members of a scheduled tribe called Marathis or Naikas perform it generally. But it is not restricted to this community alone. Others may perform, but they should perform main parts. Mainly the objective of the performance is to ward off the evil of the disease believed to proceed from the wrath of the Mari deity. To ensure the welfare of the household, the vegetation in the estate and the domesticated animals is another objective of the performance.

There are two main traditions of performing Gondolu Puje. One is Deva Kriya and another is Asura Kriya. In the former tradition animal sacrifice is forbidden and Brahmins perform the rituals like puja. In the Asura style members of the Marathi community function as priests and animal sacrifice is a part of the ritual. Mostly pigs are sacrificed. The Gondolu dance is an important part of the ritual. This has a regular sequence of steps. The chief dancer is called Parasurama who stands before the deity’s seat, plays on his drum and sings songs in praise of
Bhairava. Others follow him. After the ritual, food is served to the participants as prasada.

Koraga Vesha:

It is found during Suggi in Tulunadu. Anyone can act as Koraga. Usually the Mera, Mansa, Maila, Naika, Gowda and other communities have involved in this art form. It is very simple. The artist applies black powder all over body. He should not take bath before completing the dance. A small piece of cloth is tied to waist and wears a hat made out of spathe of arecanut. Before impersonation, puja is offered to Koraga Taniya. They dance by singing songs.

Chunna:

It is also performed by Koragas and found in Kundapur Taluk. During Maranakatte fair Koragas visit houses and collect paddy or rice as padi (gift). During Kambala also they play dolu. There are about eight artists who wear small piece of cloth and tie nekki and mango leaves, apply black powder to body and hat of arecanut spathe to head. He has mora and wood sword on hands. They dance according to sound of musical instruments.

Mera Dudi Kunitha:

Dudi is a special musical instrument of Meras. This folk dance is performed as entertainment, worship and tradition. It is performed for entertainment at evening when guests come to home. It is also performed as worship during Chennu Nalike and Mugera Kola and as tradition in marriage. Dudi Kunitha is accompanied by paddanas mainly Oppele dairane, Tali, iyamma Jo, Yenurenkamma etc for entertainment, Chennu Koraga and Mugera Sandhis for worship and Darilo for marriage. Mansa and Mayila communities also practice Dudi Kunitha. Other tribes also practice it.
**Pugudi Kunitha of Siddis:**

*Siddis* brought it from fisher women of Uttara Kannada and Gowliga women. *Komarapantha* people also perform this. Women in equal number stand face to face and carry pot in hand dance with song and *gummate* sound. We can call it pot dance. Here pot of Konkani tradition and *gummate* of Halakki Okkaliga are mixed. They perform it not only during *Chouthi* festival but also during other occasion for entertainment. The Halakki Okkaliga women also perform it during Diwali festival.

**Damami dance:**

It is performed during *Mahalaya Amavasye* and *Navarathri*. One artist plays *damami* and two women or men with sari carrying peacock feather and coconut cover dance. If someone impersonated, people ask for relief.

**Dances of Gowligas:**

Gowligas are found in Uttara Kannada, Shimoga, Belgaum and Chickmagalore. *Gajjalacha, Jaga Kunitha, Jimma Kunitha, Fera* dances are main dance forms of Gowligas. Among them first men and other two by women perform two.

**Kule Nalike or Kale Kola:**

It is performed in Dakshina Kannada for last ritual of death. It is usually organised by rich people. An artist, who impersonates *Kule*, dances round the tomb. He applies black colour with white lines to body and *thiri* to waist. Now it is disappearing, but we can find it in *Yakshagana*.

**Keelu Kudure dance:**

It does not belong to any caste. It is found in Dakshina Kannada district. An instrument, which resembles like horse called *Keelu Kudure*, is prepared. The stomach, chest and backside *Keelu Kudure* are made out of bamboos. Artists or
Akkasaligas do it. In this dance form two artists characterising king and queen dance face to face with Keelu Kudure. There are other characters also.

**Maragalu Kunitha:**

It is found in Uttara Kannada during fairs and Hagaranas. It consists of unique wooden legs, which the artists literally wear to gain unusual height. Wearing uniquely designed artificial legs the artists easily capture the attention of the people through executing impressive but difficult feats.

**Hoovina Makkala Kunitha:**

Patagara community in Uttara Kannada performs it. It is a religious art performed during Kalikamba fair. All artists wear garland of red flowers. They tie flowers to knee, thie and other parts of body and wear sari. They prepare a mudrekolu from rice and flowers. There are 12 artists in a group.

**Jogi Arasu:**

It is now disappearing. Shettigar family of Suratkal performs it. It is performed as a symbol of win of Jogi Arasu. One boy is dressed as Yuvaraj and coronation is observed. Procession of Yuvaraj sitting on horse with Kombu valaga is made.

**Tulasi dance:**

Though Tulasi Puja is performed in all over Karnataka, they are popular in Udupi and Kundapur taluks during Diwali. In this performance two persons sing devotional songs and dance around Tulasi katte. Others follow them. There are about 20 artists.

**Veeragase:**

Veeragase is found in some parts of Uttara Kannada. In this performance artists re-enact the creation and exposition of supernatural powers of a religious hero-Veerabhadra. The narration is powerful and every pause is marked by chants.
like 'Ha Ha Ha... Rudra, Ha Ha Ha... Deva, Ha Ha Ha Shambhu, Ha Ha Ha Veera'.

**Ottekola:**

It is another folk dance that comes under the umbrella of the Bhuta tradition. The presentation of Ottekola begins with the preparation of burning coal in an open field. The performers are required to walk over burning charcoal pits. Akin to other dance performances, dedicating to Bhuta worshiping, the performer of Ottekola is an excellent communicator who steals the show through his sincere worshipping of deity for the total welfare of the community. It is the quality of unselfishness of the performer that motivates the audience to actively reciprocate his communication.

**Lion Dance:**

The folk dance, which is totally free from ritualistic and religious barriers, is lion dance, the popular dance of the Honnavara taluk in Uttara Kannada usually performed by Yakshagana artists. The dance is in effect a charming imitation of a lion's movements. Hence the dancer wears a costume, which closely resembles the lion. With the perfect portrayal of a lion's behaviour, movements, mode of hunting and preying, lion dance is not only entertaining but educative also. (Usharani, 1996)

Other folk dance forms found in Coastal Karnataka are Nrutta and Kalata, Dakke Bali, Gondara Mandala Kunitha, Bhajane mela, Mahida Purushe, Garudi Gombe Kunitha or Bethala Kunitha, Bedara Kunitha, Aanjaneya Vesha, Bandi Habba, Fishermen's dance, Dappurathije dance, Dau dance, Dindi dance, Dolu dance, Holi Sigma dance, Jade Kola, Jodi Vesha, Kapalara dance, Bear dance, Sword dance, Kodangi Vesha, Kudiara dance, Leleholela dance, Mandala dance, Paneera dance, Pilipanji dance, Targadi dance etc. But most of them are not existed today.
Folk songs:

Folk music is commonly believed to be the expression of the rustic mind. It basically reflects joy, sorrow, fear and social memories of the common people. Accordingly folk music has been described as the autobiography of people. It is forever old and forever new, like the very earth that is the home of the folk (Das H.C. 1979 p ii). Simplicity and uniformity in rhythm characterises the structure of folk song. The songs contain numerous stanzas, sung in more or less the same tune. Its melody is indeed, original and distinct (Usharani, 1996, p13). Some of the folk song forms are as follows.

**Sandi:**

*Sandi* is a folk epic or narrative poetry of a heroic personality. It is an epic containing many chapters for example, *Jumadi Bhuta Sandi*. It is usually performed during *Bhuta Kola*. The women also recite *sandi* and *paddanas* when they are free to get mental relief and entertainment.

**Paddanas:**

The folk songs of undivided Dakshina Kannada seem to have developed well. It has a haunting charm. The Tulu and Kannada folk songs are simple in style and beautiful in concert. They are sung both in leisure times and during work. The Tulu *paaddanas* are narrative legends describing the story of the spirit, its origin, and heroic deeds and process. They resemble ballads or folk epics of varying length.

**Kabitha:**

*Kabitha* means a small piece of poetry usually sung while planting the paddy seedlings by the women folk. The main speaker sings this narrative poem and after each stanza the co-workers repeat the main theme of the song. The content may sometimes be the narration of certain events or an incident or a humourous episode. It may also be a satire or a joke passed towards the master or
the landlord or it may also be the story of an animal. This could also be a voice for the pleasure and pains, dreams and aspirations of the women.

*Kabitas* usually have a thin story line. But certain kinds of *kabita* like *Eejo Manjotti Gona* have a strong story-base. Others have description of an event narrated in well-coined words and mixed with a sense of humour. Some faiths have also been attached with *kabita*. Depending upon the experience, intelligence, memory and sense of humour of the singer, one can hope that *kabita* will continue to develop. But today *kabitas* are not heard, because paddy fields are disappearing and machines replaced manual work. The young women know only film songs not *kabita* or *sandi-paddana*.

**Gummate Pong:**

It is an Okkaliga folk art in which songs are recited by playing *gummate*. *Gummate* is made up of long pot covered with skin of an animal. The playing of four *gummates* is called *gummate Pong*. There are four *gummate* players and another *Kachcha* player and an artist called *Kucha*. It has main role in *Hagarana* of Halakki. They usually play *gummate* in evening. This practice is more from *Kamana Humnime* to *Suggi*. Other occasions are *Karitkotsava*, *Hulihabba* and *Ugadi*. Sometimes prizes are given to best players. *Gummate* song consists praising of 30 Gods. The Marathi community of Dakshina Kannada also plays *gummate* during *Suggi* month by singing Tulu songs. They visit homes by playing and singing. Though it is for entertainment, it has religious background.

**Uralu:**

It is a song in Tulu sung by farmers while ploughing field in undivided Dakshina Kannada district. Now it is disappeared because of modern technology adopted in ploughing and disappearance of paddy fields.
Ballads:

A ballad in simple terms has been defined as a narrative lyric of known or unknown origin that tells a story. It is originally composed more or less spontaneously, by the peasantry or the common folk and is differentiated from the other kinds of poetry. Ballads are spread all over the state. They are found in Uttara Kannada district also. Ballads are dramatic, as there is action and focus on situations and episodes in its narration and often proceed through dialogues, moving smoothly from one episode to the next.

Other folk songs available in this region are Gee Gee, Bingi Pada, Karbala songs, Paddy beating songs, Shobhane songs, Hengasara Haadu, Sampradayada Hadu etc. But most of the folk song forms are disappearing now. They can be heard in radio and in competitions. Youths practice them for winning prizes in competitions like Yuvajana Mela.

Other folk art forms:

Apart from these, some other folk art forms are existed in Coastal Karnataka. Some of them are explained.

Hagarana:

It is impersonation tradition of Halakki Okkaliga of Uttara Kannada during Suggi. It is also found in Mukris, Komara sects etc. On the second day of Suggi all men take part of different characters. There is no rule about taking part. It is left to their imagination. They are competitive. It is for entertainment. Before giving performance, the artists assemble in front of Tulasi katte and offer puja to Jattiga. Then go from home to home and dance.

Kambala:

The buffalo race, which is a popular form of rural entertainment held in the region between Kundapur in the north and Kasargod in the south of coastal area is called Kambala. The Kambala season extends from Diwali in the month of
October to Shivarathri in the month of February. The Kambala sport begins when the first harvest is over and the field is getting ready for the next transplantation. The sport takes place in more than 30 places in this region.

A few days before the Kambala starts, the field is ploughed and get ready for the sport with the cooperation of the people. A night before sport starts Koraga dance is performed on manjotti. Among the dancers, one is women character. As the dance develops its tempo, they even indulge in obscenities like embracing each other and making advances at the woman character in their midst. They sing songs also. As the dawn approaches, Koragas get into the Kambala field and run like buffaloes. It is called Panikullune. The real Kambala starts with buffalo race. There are different competitive races and after the race, prizes are distributed to owners of winning buffalos.

Cockfight:

Started as a pure pass time, cockfighting today is a very serious business. In olden times, when men had little to pass their time in the evenings, cockfights became popular. All men in the village would head to the local cockfight arena amidst lot of band playing to inform other dwellers that there was a cockfight in progress. Today, though the peculiar game has been banned in India on grounds of cruelty, it continues to survive in the interiors of Dakshina Kannada. On festivals like Diwali, cockfights even become major centres of gambling. Anybody who owns a cock can participate in the event.

Cockfights are held only on certain auspicious occasions. A typical cockfight starts with a referee called padagara tying something resembling a crown made of blade known as the bal to the feet of the cocks. The blades, three to eight inches long are fixed behind the right foot's last finger. Once the referee is convinced that there is no fraud involved with the blades, the fight begins. The fight continues till the weaker cock dies of blade wounds. In case a cock runs from
the arena in between a fight, the other cock is declared as the winner. The owner of winning cock gets the opposite cock.

**Tutedara:**

*Tute* in Tulu language means a torch made up of a bundle of dried palm leaves. *Tutedara* is apparently a mock fight held during annual festivals in certain temples in which contending parties facing each other in the temple yard throw burning torches as missiles. It is a usual feature of the annual festival in the Durgaparameshwari temple of Kateel.

**Budabudike:**

It is found in Gondaliga sect of Marathi community. These artists are called *Narasannas*. They use a small *damaruga* type musical instrument. They tell *shakuna*. A headgear, long shirt, coat, *kachche panche*, small piece of cloth to waist, bags, *gaggara* in thumb, *kadaga* or *gejje* in hand, long *nama* on forehead are their make up and dress. They visit houses by telling *shakuna* and collecting alms.

**Kole Basava:**

It is like street play. Some stories are played with dressed bullocks. Mostly gypsies perform this art. They go to homes with their dressed bullocks and give performances. They collect money, rice, coconut and other gifts for their performance. Apart from these, *Dombarata*, *Chendata*, *Chennemane* and other folk games are available in Coastal Karnataka.

The list of the popular folk arts, presently existing folk arts, disappearing folk arts and disappeared folk arts is given in the Appendix C. This shows that Coastal Karnataka is rich in folk arts. But folklorists and communication scholars have identified some folk arts only. So only some of them have been used in mass media and development communication.
Development Communication:

The concept of development communication is of recent origin. After the liberation of countries from the colonial rule after World War II, the newly independent nations were formulating their own policies of national development. When the policies were taking shape, experts like Rostow (1960), McClelland (1961), and Hagen (1962) propounded new theories of development. A majority of them during this period believed that economic development was the quickest way to development. They adopted the western model of development termed as 'dominant paradigm' of development. During this period between 1950 and 1960, the writings of Lemer (1958) and Schramm (1964) brought to focus the important role communication could play in accelerating social development. The national governments took note of their importance and as a result this aspect dominated the developmental policies envisaged by the governments and resulted in the growth of mass communication channels.

However, the period between 1950s and 1970s totally neglected the use of traditional media. This was because of the major thrust of the dominant paradigm of development, according to which anything that was even remotely connected with the indigenous culture was to be eschewed (Melkote, 1991: 213). Since they represented local culture, they were regarded as vehicles that would discourage modern attitudes and behavioural patterns and instead reinforce cultural values of the community. Moreover, Lerner (1958) proposed that the direction of change in communication systems in all societies was from the oral media to the technology based mass media. Also the modern mass media were considered as indices and agents of modernisation. Thus, all resources in Third World nations were devoted to promote the growth of radio and television, to the neglect of traditional media.

After 1970s, with the shift from the dominant paradigm to people centered development model, newer concepts of development such as self-help, grassroots participation, the two-way communication etc., came to the fore. This shift led to the examination of the use of traditional media to be considered as vehicles of...
information, persuasion and entertainment of the vast rural masses. Thus, the folk arts got a place in development communication.

Folk arts in development communication:

The folk media consist of a variety of forms: folk theatre, puppetry, storytelling forms, folk dances, ballads and music. They have been serving as vehicles of communication and entertainment in Asia, Africa and Latin America for centuries (Melkote, 1991: 211). Therefore, the folk media, which is embedded in the culture of the people, can play a vital role in the new concept of development. Recognising the importance of traditional media, the Mac Bride Commission Report entitled *Many Voices, One World* (1982) observed:

“Extensive experience shows that traditional forms of communication can be effective in dispelling the superstitions, archaic perceptions and unscientific attitudes that people have inherited as part of tradition and which are difficult to modify if the benefits of change are hard to demonstrate. Practitioners of the traditional media use subtle form of persuasion by presenting the required message in locally popular artistic forms. This cannot be rivaled by any other means of communication. Examples abound where song, drama, dance groups and the like are used to promote campaigns against social evils (such as alcoholism, burdensome dowries, discrimination against women, archaic taboos) or for advances in farming, health, nutrition and family welfare, agricultural reforms, national integration and similar goals”.

In India, the State Governments have been the biggest users of traditional media for propagation of developmental programmes among the masses. Similarly the Directorate of Field Publicity and the Departments of Public Relations and Information in the states have employed these media extensively for the same purpose. The Song and Drama Division (SDD) of the Central Government uses the folk media such as theatre, music and song and dance to modernise people’s attitudes and behaviours (Parmar, 1975; Malhan, 1985:171). Basically, the Song
and Drama Division acts as a publicity unit informing the people through the folk media performances about services and programmes made available by the government, persuade the audience to accept the modern ideas and change their attitudes and behaviours accordingly.

The Song and Drama Division disseminates information on development issues among target groups through the medium of the performing arts, traditional arts, puppet shows, folk media, mythological recitals and the like. As the medium of transmission is rooted in the local ethos and traditions, target groups more easily grasp the developmental messages. The Song and Drama Division presented number of programmes on the themes of Panchayati Raj, National Social Assistance Programme, Rural Housing and Self-employment Programmes.

The different folk art forms of the country have been widely used for development communication. The popular folk songs and story telling forms were used to propagate mythological, political and social themes with the contemporary messages in an interesting way. The known dance drama forms used in development communication were Garba of Gujarat, Bhangra of Punjab and Lavani of Maharastra. The format of the theatre is well-known in development communication. The folk theatre has played major role in political and social changes. Through the form, messages were carried out and values were perpetuated along with the popular entertainment. The popular folk theatre forms used in development communication were Bhavai of Gujarat, Tamasha of Maharastra, Nautanki and Ramlila of northern part, Jatra of Bengal, Yakshagana of Karnataka and Therukoothu of Tamilnadu. The voluntary organisations made wide use of puppet plays on alcoholism, unionisation, environment and health education with manageable funds by using such adaptations. The street theatres were also used for propagating development messages. In India they were used to create awareness of the freedom struggle. In 1944, Bijon Bhattacharya, a founder of Indian Peoples' Theatre Association (IPTA) spread the stories of the exploitation of peasants by the landowners through the street theatre.
Folk media are intimate with masses, readily available at low cost and providing instant feedback. So women's groups in cities and rural areas have used folk art like street theatre to raise social consciousness on the issues like dowry deaths, exploitative advertisement, legal rights etc. The Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad (KSSP) has employed street theatre to popularise science and literacy. It also used folk media for activating people on environmental issues. One issue taken up by the Parishad was the preservation of the Silent Valley, the India's only surviving rain forest. The folk performances like folk arts, songs, street plays were used to educate the masses on pollution, health and deforestation in Kerala (Madhusudan, 2002).

Similarly, the other government departments such as the Department of Science and technology, the National Institute of Design and the Space Application Centre produced over 200 programmes using folk forms (Mukhopadhyay, 1994: 40-41). Not only government departments, but the non-governmental organisations (NGOs) also used folk media for developmental purposes. For example, Ramaswamy (1998) found the usefulness of 'tom, tom' a traditional medium of communication in rural Tamil Nadu. The Directorate of Field Publicity, a unit of the Information and Broadcasting Ministry employed this art form to propagate agricultural development messages.

In 1971 the Bank of India, a nationalised bank carried out a campaign for small savings through puppet shows (Malhan, 1985:169). The Bank engaged a team of puppeteers to tour selected rural areas in Uttara Pradesh to educate rural masses on small savings schemes. A puppet play produced by the Indian Institute of Mass Communication that was shown in 200 villages could increase the number of deposits in the Bank from these areas within two months. Similarly UNESCO sponsored project successfully used four different folk formats in popularising hygiene and sanitation among rural women in four southern states of India. The folk theatre Burrakatha was used in the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh for the same purpose (Wijk, 1998). In Tamil Nadu, Action for Cultural and Political
Change (ACPC), a peasant run organisation used drama for social transformation (Kidd, 1984).

However, many national and international seminars held on the role of folk media and development suggested the integration of folk media with mass media for quicker transmission of information as it was motivating the rural audience (Rajendran, 1992). In this context, the expert group-meet held in London in 1972, convened by International Planned Parenthood Federation, has made recommendations to the UNESCO for effective use of folk media in development. Some of the important recommendations were:

- The folk artists and other craftsmen should be supported and encouraged in maintaining the original form and character of their art and be given recognition in the form of awards and incentives;
- In order to systematise the exploitation of the folk media, encouragement and resources should be provided to set up an appropriate organisation at the national level with the responsibility of carrying out the various functions with regard to utilisation of folk media in communication programmes;
- Demonstration of projects on the use of folk media to gain experience and models for the integration of mass media and folk media;
- Special assistance programmes for involving youth, women’s organisations, labour unions, rural co-operatives and other development organisations in the use of folk media for motivational and educational purposes and so on.

Folk media can be used for disseminating development messages, because they have some in built characteristics and advantages as media of communication. According to Parmar (1975) the advantages of folk media from development point of view are:
• Traditional folk media are most intimate with the masses in all the regions of the country. Their primary appeal is to the emotions rather than the intellect;

• They command an immense variety of forms and themes to suit the communication requirements of the masses;

• They are local and live and be able to establish direct rapport with the audience;

• They are easily available to their customers;

• They are flexible to accommodate new themes;

• They are enjoyed and approved by all the people from different age groups; and

• They are low-cost media as compared to the sophisticated mass media.

More importantly the folk media present many alternatives in form and theme for experimentation in communication (Ranganath, 1980). D.K. Sujan (1993) has identified some strength and weaknesses of traditional media in development communication compare to modern media. The strengths are like cultural roots, variety of interest patterns, direct rapport with audience and possibility of converting into electronics. The weaknesses are like they cannot be universalised, cultural barriers and limited coverage area. By considering the advantages of folk arts, researchers and government agencies in India found them useful and credible channels for promoting planned change.

Introduction to selected folk arts of Coastal Karnataka:

Though the Coastal Karnataka is rich in folklore, it is difficult to study all folk arts in detail. So in the present study three popular folk arts of this region were selected for the purpose of case study. So it is better to introduce them in this chapter.
**Yakshagana:**

*Yakshagana* is a traditional theatre form of Coastal and Malnad area of Karnataka and Kasargod district of Kerala, which has brought fame to this region. The very word *Yakshagana*, lights up the hearts of the locals and thousands flock to watch it, often through the entire night continuing to the wee hours of morning. The artists attain a celebrity status even at other social occasions. A temple based art *Yakshagana* has its origin in the 15th Century. It has clear links with the classical *Natyashastra* traditions on one hand while on the other it seems to be an amalgamation of elements drawn from the local *Bhuta* worship, martial arts and folk traditions.

Experts have placed the origin of *Yakshagana* from the 11th Century to the 16th Century. Vidwan Bannanje Govindacharya quoted a legend which said that in 1300, Sage Narahari Thirtha started a *Dasavathara Ata* performance and a troupe in Udupi and later this spread to other places and grew into what we call *Yakshagana* today. Anyway, Yakshagana must have been an established form by the time of famous *Yakshagana* poet Parthisubba (1600) who wrote the Ramayana in *Yakshagana*. From 1950 onwards *Yakshagana* has been performed even in Tulu. All the traditional troupes were started under the patronage of various temples and independent commercial troupes also came in existence.

The stories of *Yakshagana* are drawn from the *Ramayana, Mahabharatha, Bhagavatha* and from other mythological episodes. The struggle between the good and the evil and the ultimate triumph of the good is main theme of traditional *Yakshagana*. As almost all-ancient arts were started as a form of God-worship, *Yakshagana* was also started as a form of worship. Even today most of the temple troupes play *Yakshagana* as an offering called *Seveyata*.

It is said that the word *Yakshagana* originally denoting musical composition is probably of Andhra origin and later applied to the Karnataka theatre form. It was earlier known as *Ata, Bayalata* (field play) or *Dasavathara Ata* and the last denoting its *Vaishnava* origin. Some opined that *Yakshagana* was
evolved from the ancient form of Bhuta worship, which was very popular in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka and Kasaragod district of Kerala. In the process of evolution Yakshagana was also influenced by the folk dance, song, Sanskrit drama and also from Bharata's Natyashasthra.

Yakshagana like many other forms defies neat classification into categories like folk, classical, rural. It can be included into each of these or all of them together depending upon our line of approach. Being a theatre form unlike a dance form, it is more plural and dynamic. And hence it exhibits many types and varieties inside itself. However, Yakshagana can be rightly called a traditional form. Primarily it is a name given to the one prevailing in Coastal and Malnad areas of Karnataka, though in fringe forms like Doddata are also called by the same name often especially recently . The traditional theatre form Mudalpaya of Southern Karnataka, the Doddata of Northern Karnataka, the Kelike in the borders of Andhra Pradesh, the Ghattadakore of Kollegal in Chamarajnagar district – are such forms. Among them, the Ghattadakore is a direct branch of Coastal Yakshagana, while Mudalapaya is the most closely connected form. There is a form called Yakshaganam in Andhra Pradesh also which exhibits resemblance to the forms of Karnataka plateau region.

The Yakshagana of Coastal Karnataka is divided into Thenkuthittu and Badaguthittu. The Badaguthittu is very popular in Uttara Kannada district of Karnataka and Thenkuthittu is in the erstwhile Dakshina Kannada district including Kasargod district. These two groups are distinguished by their costumes used by the troupes and the dance style (Angika). Thenkuthittu costumes resemble with the Kathakali to a certain extent. In this style the costume and make up are very colourful. Especially the demonic characters are super human and meta worldly. But the dance movements are limited and the variety is little. But the spontaneous conversation, very much an original and unique feature of this School of coastal Yakshagana, has seen its supreme heights. The costumes and make up of Badaguthittu are not as gaudy as those of the Thenkuthittu School are. They are
more elegant and sublime. Even the dance movements as preserved today have a high degree of grace and vibrancy.

In *Yakshagana* music and speech go hand in hand and it could reach a good distance without our modern sound system. *Yakshagana* comes in three forms—the *Ata* form with dance and costume, the *Talamaddale* without costume and dance but with songs and dialogue and *Gombeyata*, which is a puppet show. The artists without makeup and costumes perform the *Yakshagana Kuta* or *Talamaddale*. Musical accompaniment are the same as *Yakshagana Bayalata* with *Vachikabhinaya* and the artists create a fascinating dialogue between themselves according to the text of the play.

The main attraction of *Yakshagana* is stagecraft where characters like Gods, Demons and *Sanyasis* are presented in a supernatural atmosphere and the audience are carried to a world of fantasy. In olden days it is performed usually at night lasting from 9.00 p.m. to 6.00 a.m. in the open-air. The stage of *Yakshagana* is rectangular in shape. One side of the stage floor *Bhagavatha* sits with his accompaniment. *Bhagavatha* is the narrator, director or can be called as *Suthradhara*. He also sings with the accompaniment of *tala* (*Jagate*) *mridanga* (*maddale*), harmonium (*shruthi*) and *chakrathala*. Besides, high-pitched *chende* is used in special occasions. In olden days oil lamps were used to light the stage. The text of the *Yakshagana* is called *Yakshagana prasanga*, which is narrated in sets of songs. These songs are set of different *ragas* and *talas* presented according to the *kalas* (periods of night). There are about 100 ragas in *Yakshagana*.

Traditionally, the performance begins with the *Sabhalakshana* (*Purvaranga* or the preliminaries) constituting prayers and invocations to deities like Ganesha, Rama, Devi, Shiva, Subramanya and some music, dance and comic sequences with little dialogue performed by *Balagopala* and two female characters. The beating of *chende* follows it. Then *Bhagavatha* begins the *prasanga* by reciting song, which follows the *artha* (meaning), or the oral text by the actors. It is not merely a translation, but an improvised expansion,
interpretation and creative presentation of the story. The Yakshagana is a total theatre because it has everything of a performing art. It entertains and enlightens both the learned and the illiterate.

The pattern of the song-dance-word sequence varies depending upon the character and the mood of the scenes. The Hasyagara (clown) appears in various characters like the Charaka (servant), Narada, Rishi, Shakuna (omen) and Courtier. The performance progressively gathers speed and ends with a mangala on the stage. The veelya (honorarium) is then presented to the troupe in the green room. The dance is robust, full of energy and forceful movements based both on tala and bhava. There are different patterns for entry, exit, journey and battle and are more suggestive than descriptive using limited gestures effectively. The movements of the Hasyagara are humourous while that of the female characters are smoother.

Systematic training in dance, music, dialogue and makeup (dressing) is necessary for an artist. Dialogue and makeup can be learnt only by practice. All forms of abhinaya namely, angika, vachika, aharya and bhava follow a fixed development over the centuries. The only art to which the Yakshagana of Coastal Karnataka can be compared is Kathakali in Malayalam. But the highly stylized expression of motions through the various mudras peculiar to Kathakali is not observed in this theatre form.

The characters of this art can be distinguished as romantic and demonical. The role of Karna, Arjuna etc are treated as romantic role using colourful and pleasing costumes whereas Ravana, Mahishasure, Duryodhana etc are treated as demonical role and their facial makeup is very intricate resembling Kathakali techniques painted by the artists himself. The artists playing Satvika and Sringara roles use green shirts named Dagale. Rajasa use red shirt and Tamasa black shirt. The dress of a character depicts its habit and behaviour. The main alankara of the head is called Kedage-Mundale, Mundas (Pagadi) Kirita Kesarthattu and Mudi. The main colour for the face decoration is called aradala (chayam), ingalika (red),
green, kadige, calcium, rice powder and kumkuma and the colour of the face is changed according to the nature of the character.

With the socio-economic changes of the 19th century, arts like Yakshagana also changed. The 19th century produced a big number of compositions. Around 1800, a troupe from Dharmastala visited the court of the king of Mysore and established a troupe there. In the 1840s, a troupe from Uttara Kannada visited Maharastra, and inspired the first modern age mythological drama by Vishudas Bhave. A number of troupes arose all over the Coastal Karnataka and probably in other parts of Karnataka too. By the early decades of this century the structure of Yakshagana reached a definite shape and form.

In 1930s some changes appeared in compositions, organisations and presentation of Yakshagana. Dance and the spoken word was further developed and refined. But in costume, a type of degeneration started setting in due to the use of modern clothing and stone jewellery, in place of handloom clothing and wooden ornaments. The Year 1950 saw the birth of tent troupes giving performances to audience by tickets with tent theatres and furniture for seating. These troupes brought in commercialisation of Yakshagana with both merits and demerits. Yakshagana saw major changes in form and organisation, electrical lights replaced the gas lights, petromax lamps. Seating arrangements were improved.

Major changes came in the themes, with the inclusion of folk epics, Sanskrit dramas and imaginary stories forming the thematic base. Popular entertainment became the criterion in place of classical presentation. Tulu, the language of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts was introduced on the stage. This gained great popularity. All these trends continued with added vigour after 1970s with a new element of influence. Noted writer K. Shivaram Karanth experimented with the dance form by introducing Western musical instruments. He also reduced the time of a Yakshagana performance from 12 hours to two and half hours for the convenience of city dwellers. Another trend that has emerged in
modern *Yakshagana* is the incorporation of movie stories. The best example is the *prasanga* titled *Nagavalli*, which has been inspired by the Kannada movie, *Aaptamitra*. Though it has been derided the purists, these *prasangas* are quite popular among people.

*Yakshagana* is one of the most living art traditions in the World. There are about 30 full fledged professional troupes and about 200 amateur troupes in *Yakshagana*. A full-fledged commercial troupe requires an investment of about six to ten lakhs. *Yakshagana* as a whole employs about 2,000 artists and personnel who go on *thirugata* (tour) that being a systematic itinerary. A poor man’s art, a full show of nine hours’ *Yakshagana* costs about 4,000 rupees to 10,000 rupees today. Professional troupes go on tour between November to May, giving about 180-200 shows. There are about one thousand professional artists and much bigger number of amateurs. Further there are off season shows during the wet season, the anniversary shows, school and college students *Yakshagana* and of course the *Talamaddale* performances. All put together, we can safely say that Karnataka witnesses about 12,000 *Yakshagana* performances every year. So *Yakshagana* has not so far shown signs of quantity decline, in spite of very fast modernisation and urbanisation.

**Bhuta worship:**

The *Bhuta* worship or worship of the spirits is a characteristic feature of Coastal Karnataka in which, a highly stylized variety of the ritual dance of the spirit impersonator can be seen. The most important aspect of *Bhuta* worship and *Naga* worship is possession, trance and the dialogue of the possessed impersonator with the devotees. The *Bhuta* impersonator-dancer behaves like an incarnation of the concerned spirit, listens to the worries and problems of the devotees, warns and comforts them, solves their mental and physical problems. He acts like a healer and solves the legal and judicial problems of the village. Among the religious faiths of the Dravidians of South India the spirit cult or worship of semi-
divine spirits appears to be the most primitive one. This complex system of rituals and beliefs, music and narratives, dances and dialogues, trances and oracles reflects the socio-economic orders, thought patterns, artistic achievements and socio-cultural values enshrined in the rustic societies of different regions.

The people of Karnataka follow a dual religious life of worshipping mythological Gods as well as local spirits. The mythological Gods worshipped in temple under the leadership of Brahmin priests are silent spectators receiving offerings and they cannot be approached directly. On the other hand these spirits are the localized and personalized deities who influence the lives of the devotees through a more intimate relationship. These spirits surround human beings as their guardian angels and conscience keepers. They have certain fixed spheres of influence. The villager tries to live in harmony with these spirits associated with his family or village or region and he offers them periodic oblation. They in turn protect the villagers, talk and warn them as and when necessary.

The Bhuta rituals enormously vary from village to village according to the social structure of the society. There are about 350 Bhutas to this day. Bhutas are believed to be capable of shaping the welfare of votaries. The Bhuta cult has its own priest class and impersonators who act as communicators of the divine spirit. According to U.P. Upadhyaya and Sushila P. Upadhyaya (1984) the spirits of Tulu speaking Coastal Karnataka can be classified as follows:

a) The spirits of totemistic origin like Panjurli (pig), Pilchandi (tiger), Nadigoona (bull) etc.

b) Mother goddesses like Jumaadi, Lekkesiri, Ullaalti, Maariamma etc

c) Attendant ganas of God Shiva like Virabhadra and Guliga.

d) Certain incarnations of mythological gods like Vishnumuurti, Bermeru, Jataadhari and others.

e) Spirits of cultural heroes who met with tragic death like Kooti-Chennaya, Kalkuda-Kallurti, Siri, Kodabbu, Koraga-Taniya and others.

f) The serpent spirits like Naga.
The Bhutas are also classified as 1) Bhutas of magane (region) 2) Bhutas of village 3) Bhutas of Guttu and 4) Bhutas of family. The performance of Bhuta is also named in different ways according to their ritual like Kola, Nema, Mechchi, Jalata, Kendaseve, Maime, Bandi, Ottekola, etc. (H. C. Boralingaiah, 1993).

The nightlong ceremonies are conducted in well-organized manner with all pomp and festivity. It is called Bhuta Kola or Nema. A well-decorated arena gives the appearance of a ritualistic stage with the image of the deity and other objects of worship well arranged on one side and the disciplined devotees on the other side. Pipers and drummers seated on another side are ready with their instruments to provide music and drum beats of varying tempo for different stages in the processions and dance ritual. The pendal is well decorated with various figures made from palm leaf, mango leaf and areca flower. During the performance musical instruments like the mouri, tase and shruti are used. The ritual dance is very artistic and attracts all the spectators. Bhuta or divine spirits have their own myths or epics, which are called paddanas. Some of the Bhuta paddanas are sung in the fields by the women folk. During the Bhuta performance women folk render the paddanas with beating tembare.

The impersonator is slowly prepared for self-hypnotisation and for imposing the spirit on him. He is ceremoniously given oil for a ritual bath to make his body physically purified and mentally calm. He also wears coconut leaf gown. Then his facial makeup begins. Different indigenous colours are used to display symbolically the characteristic features of the spirit. His wife, sister or mother sings the paddana, which narrates the birth of that spirit, its descent into the land, heroic deeds, its travels and sphere of influence etc. This prepares the impersonator to identify him with the spirit concerned. The impersonators are hereditary singers, dancers and painters. They sing paddana in front of the image of the spirit accompanied by appropriate abhinaya or meaningful gestures. In this way they experience the emotions of the impersonator. This way not only is the impersonator mentally prepared through successive stages for the realization of the
spirit, the devotees are also prepared as sympathetic observers or sahridayas. Their faith and devotion contribute to reach the climax of the situation.

A sublime situation is created when the spectators remain spell bound and everything abruptly stops by a hysterical cry of the impersonator. He assumes the role of the spirit himself and starts calling the authorities to inquire why he is invoked. He addresses everyone according to his rank. There are certain clichés ridden and hackneyed expressions through which the organizers propitiate the spirit and beg protection, prosperity, good crop and wealth for the entire community.

The spirit through the oracle in a highly stylized language conveys the pleasure and promises protection and prosperity if pleased with the rituals and demands. He prescribes certain punitive rituals for acts of insult or impurity to the holy place or certain acts of commissions and omissions on part of the devotees. Personal problems of health or disputes are presented before the spirit. Extricating the devil out of the body cures certain mental problems of possession by devils and ghosts. While settling the quarrels or disputes the impersonator assumes the role of a tribunal and conducts in a dignified manner befitting the role of a spirit as upholder of truth and righteousness. The decision of the impersonator is final without provision for appeal. It is said that during the days of the British rule, the judges took serious note of the verdicts given at certain important shrines like that of Dharmasthala and the promises made before such divine impersonators. To solve physical or mental problems, offerings are made to Bhutas and to protect property there is a system called Kodikattune, a ritual in which by name of Bhuta an offering is tied to the tree. Persons who violate it will loose their life. These significant social issues are involved in Bhuta performance.

There are no major changes in Bhuta worship. Some changes have found in dress and dance of Bhuta impersonator. The Bhuta Kola is observed grandly in some places with electric lights and other decorations. It has been used in television and cinema also. Local cable television channels regularly telecast
programmes on Bhuta worship and artists. It is not used for development communication because of its rigid and religious characteristics.

**Halaki Suggi Kunitha:**

*Suggi Kunitha*, one of the festival dances of Uttara Kannada. Men perform it usually during the harvest season. The dance starts on a full moon day or four days before the full moon. The Halaki men and boys in a group move from village to village beating the *gummate* and singing songs of fertility and collect the cash and grains from each household of village. The beautifully dressed artists dance with sticks and sometimes even with peacock feathers.

There are some legends about origin of *Suggi Kunitha*. One such legend says that once in Kailasa, Ganga and Gouri intend to teach some arts to their children. The teacher sent by Shiva tells about *Suggi Kunitha* when children reject most of the options. He cautions them that if they practice their parents will get anger. But children put pressure on him. Finally he teaches them. They go from home to home performing *Suggi Kunitha*. By observing this Shiva gets anger and puts curse on them. As a result the *kolu-kuncha* is dropped. At that time a Halakki Okkaliga boy rushes there and picks it. The children submit all materials to him. The teacher preaches him to give up non-vegetarian food for five days, worship god and to perform the art without cutting plants. That tradition is found even today.

Another legend says that the three Gods namely, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva start *Suggi Kunitha*. Mahadeva or Shiva with *gummate* and Brahma with *jagate* go to Narayana or Vishnu's home. After welcoming them Mahalaxmi offers dinner to them. When they are in dinner, a Halakki boy who is watching cattle takes away the *gummate* and starts to play. Three Gods are pleased with his performance. So they give him *gummate* and tell Halakki people to perform *Suggi Kunitha* every year.
Suggi is performed from **Phalguna Shuddha Dasami** to **Hunnime** (full moon day). On the first day **Arasu Gowda** (leader of the community) gives rice by offering prayer to Mahadeva, the community God. Then he gives **kolu, kuncha, gummate, tala,** and **jagate** to the artists. They keep black rice by tying it to their waist. Others get white rice. Then they go to **Karikana** where Suggi Kunitha starts. **Karikana,** a three side-closed pendal, in which a pillar called **Suragi Kamba,** is installed. It has many branches in which artists keep their **kolu, kuncha, jagate,** **gejje,** and **talas.**

On the first day artists go to this place and offer **puja** to **Karidevaru.** Then they sing and dance. The artists sing songs as their leader sings. Songs are on God. Before going from home to home by performing this dance they announce it through **Heddumbe Kolu** or **Sanne Kolu.** People welcome Suggi Kunitha troupe by offering **arathi** and **kanike.**

Artists of this dance wear a headgear (**turayi**), which is made of colourful paper, flower and plastic paper. It resembles **Chaitrada chiguru hoovu- hannu** (flower and fruits of spring season). An image of bird is kept on top of headgear. Artists wear sari to waist and a **jubba** or a long shirt with red, green and yellow colours. A piece of cloth is tied on waist. They wear **gejje** on leg and **manisara** (garland of **mani**) on neck. After tying **rumalu** on head and offering **puja** to headgear they wear it. Below the headgear they tie a **mungattu** with pieces of **mani,** mirror and **muttina sara** (pearl). Behind the headgear, garlands made of paper, flower and plastic paper are spread on backbone. They keep stick and **kuncha** on hand. This dress reflects plants with full of budding flowers and fruits.

An artist group of Suggi Kunitha includes four pairs to 12 pairs of artists with headgear, impersonators of **Karadi Hanumantha** with sword on hand, thief and police, saint and other characters, **Yakshagana** characters, **Marakalu Kunitha** artists, singers, **gummate** players, **hoylugaras,** caste leaders etc. So it becomes a big **mela.** It contains at least 40-50 people. We can find this kind of **mela** in every **Halakki koppa.** At least one artist from every home should join Suggi Mela.
Dressed artists dance according to songs of singers and playing of instrument called *gummate*. Their dance style changes according to songs and sounds of instruments. They play *Kolata* of different kinds like *Chinnada, Rannada, Belliya, Kanchina kolu, Sampige, Mallige, Hoovina kolu, Sagenavilu, Kattari, Jade kolu* etc. They play by standing round and square which is attractive.

Artists of *Kuncha Mela* keep *kuncha* in left hand and beat bottom of *kuncha* with stick of right hand. They dance and sing *Chohocho, Sohoso, Ohosa* and *Daiyyo-Daiyyo*. They dance according to songs of singers and sounds of *tala, maddale* and *gummate*. They first dance at village temple, then at leaders of village and last at other homes. The owner of home gives *kanike*. When they go to other village, the leader of village should arrange food and shelter. They can return only on full moon day.

On the full moon day they dance at homes of the village and last at leader of the community where they get *arathi*. Then they go to *Karikana* and take off make up and dress. In that night they arrange *Kamadahana* (burning of *Kama*) and keep stick and *kuncha* in front of fire and close *Suggi*.

*Suggi* dance is not done when there is *suthaka* in *koppa*. If anyone does, it won’t continue. If someone dies in home when artist is on other village, he should return to home without continuing the dance. When *Suggi Mela* of other village comes, the village Gowda should arrange food and other hospitality. Every home of *koppa* should participate in *Suggi*. If *Kuncha* is dropped in *Kuncha Kunitha*, saying *Seethe Kani* and paying fine the artist should lift it. The cost of headgear should be beard by the artist. Women should not participate in *Suggi*. Men perform the female characters.

If people observe *Suggi*, the rain rains in time. Food grains grow well. Shiva, Vishnu, Brahma, *Suryadeva* (Sun God) and others will be pleased by *Suggi* dance. So there will be peace in *koppa* and no diseases will enter the village. People who don’t have children will get children and expect good harvest from the
field. So the proverb ‘Suggiyannu Kattadavarige Shubhavilla’ (No good for whom who don’t perform Suggi) may be true.

Some changes have been made in costumes, characters and songs of Suggi Kunitha. It has been performed in other occasions also for publicity, entertainment and competition. A few attempts were made to use it mass media and also for development communication.

Among the above three folk arts namely, Yakshagana, Bhuta Kola, Suggi Kunitha, Yakshagana is very popular in this region. It has been widely used in electronic media and also used for development communication. But Suggi Kunitha is little rigid than Yakshagana and is popular in Uttara Kannada only. The Bhuta worship is very rigid compare to Yakshagana and Suggi Kunitha and is popular in both Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts. So it is very interesting to study the role of these folk arts in Coastal Karnataka as media of mass communication.

In this chapter, meaning and importance of communication with special reference to mass communication, meaning and importance of folk arts, role of folk arts in mass communication, use of folk arts in mass media and development communication were dealt with little information on folk arts of India and Karnataka. The folk arts of Coastal Karnataka were described with elaborate discussion on selected folk arts of this region namely, Yakshagana, Bhutaradane and Suggi Kunitha. This will help to understand the context and scope of this research study.