Acknowledgements

The first time I saw a Masan Jogi was as a six-year-old child. The sight of the weird man in his begging-round attire frightened me then. There were several others from various communities who went from door to door seeking alms, but Masan Jogis were different. As a child, I always wondered who those people were, where they came from, and how do they live. Hardly did I imagine then that I would work with these communities one day and eventually write a thesis on them, too. This thesis, which has its roots in my childhood curiosity, is an attempt to explore the identity of Masan Jogis and their history, occupation, social organisation, belief system and culture.

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Ashok Ohol