CHAPTER 1: WHAT’S (Y)OUR STORY?

The primary texts *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* edited by Kirin Narayan, *In Quest of Indian Folktales Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke* edited by Sadhana Naithani, and *Sirigannada, Contemporary Kannada Writings*, edited by Vivek Shanbhag narrate stories from 1884 to 2006. The stories range from folk tales (whose date and origin are unknown) to the adaptation of stories from Ramayana in Sanskrit to regional languages in the oral and the written form to autobiographical narratives in the written form. Such range of stories is a vital source of discourses of history, culture and language.

Stories as in folk and written forms are born out of a necessity to express, entertain and to communicate the imaginative understanding of life. In folk groups the professional storytellers who narrated stories to their people as a form of entertainment. These tales were invaluable for their imaginative, subjective interpretation of Life and representation of reality in everyday life situations. Such narratives carry the cultural memory of an individual and when passed on from one generation to another, it also carries collective memories of the community. Thus, the narratives carry in them layers of realisms as cultural memories that present subjective perception of various realities. They are not fragmented- especially in terms of place, space and time. As each generation adds the contemporary realities to these stories, complex perceptions of life is retained. They become valuable documents of history as they record the contemporary changes that the community
goes through. Thus, history in Folkloristics is never a single story of success or failure; it is the story of journey of humanity itself.

Secondly, both folk tales and written literatures are known to travel across time and place though their modes of transmission are different. As these stories travel, they imbibe the perspectives of different story tellers/narrators and thus accommodate a change. They hold different realities of the new place and culture; yet, the core concern is kept alive. This core concern is recognized in Folkloristics as folk motif, which is shaped by the perception of realities of the people and their place. Folk motif also determines the meaning of the story. So, as the tale evolves over a period of time and place, it presents to its audience a complex cultural code along with a definite historicity. However, the relationship between the tale and the story teller/s is kept alive because the tales are passed on from one to another by ‘word of mouth’. This symbiotic relationship between the teller and tales gives the folk tales its multidimensional, polyphonic quality and perspective. And once this relationship is disconnected, the tales freeze, lose their connection with Life as it were. With the collection folk tales, this natural connection is severed. The collected tales, as Jack Zipes in *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical theories of Folk and Fairy Tales* observes, are put to different usages; but its primary connection with the people is not only changed but disrupted. (Zipes 2002)

The documentation of folktales first began with the publication of Brothers Grimm’s *Fairy Tales* in 1812. Beginning with this and the ensuing academic interest in folktales, it was understood that to structure and analyze the
expanse of folk tales was important. But, to a certain extent, the tales froze as they entered an artificial space of collection of tales in the form of writing. This kind of transformation is mostly seen where the written form dominates as a mode of communication. However, in India, the collection of folktales began as an ethnographic endeavor. And colonial folklorists’ endeavor of collecting folk tales not only froze the tales, it uprooted the tales from their place completely. Thus dismembered, the colonial folkloristic endeavor ruptured the relationship between the tales, the community and the teller of tales.

India is considered to be the place of origin of many folk tale types. Just as folktales exist in the oral form, there were collections of folktales in the written form as well viz. Panchatantra, Hitopadesha etc. However, with the colonial folkloristic endeavor, the purpose of collection changed. In the context of such a colonial endeavor of collection of folktales, the stories have seen a translation of realities. As editors, when Kirin Narayan and Sadhana Naithani retrieve the folktales to restore them to its place of origin, the stories have new realities to narrate. These realities are the multiple realities of a Post-colonial and a new indigenous situation. But, the most important consequence of understanding these transformed realities is another significant ensuing reality that the archived indigenous poetics are remembered and re-membered to the community. This reopens the possibility of re-looking the conversation of folktales in its early purposes of narration of folktales— the discourses of realisms of the society and the individual. The process of re-membering is especially challenging and sparks off
debates of the processes of both dismembering and re-membering the tales, the question of frozen state of tales and the politics of culture.

If this realism confronts the reader with respect to Folkloristics in India, a different dimension encounters the reader with written stories. Indian literary and critical approach has been philosophical but it recognises the freedom and the role of the reader to criticize as well as evaluate a work of literature. However, the early influence of colonial education and British literature is reflected in Indian Literatures in manner of experimenting with literary genres and a new methodology of literary criticism. Initial imitation gives way to adaptation-of literary genres as well as of literary criticism. But, paradoxically, the bitter experiences of colonization, along with English literary influences, made an examination of Indian society, its practices and culture an imperative. At the same time, writers’ knowledge of history of vernacular literatures and their lived experiences in this society supported subjective representations of culture in literature. This unique combination — an awareness and faith in the indigenous belief systems that combines with the consciousness of the liberating influences of English literary influences — anchors the roots of regional sensibility to the new approaches in literature. In fact, it is most visible in the vernacular literatures that succeed in combining the English literary influences and the vernacular literary sensibilities and traditions.

In the classical age of vernacular literatures, especially in Kannada literary scenario, there are multiple voices of regional vernacular literatures, gender and folk literatures that counter and question literatures that express canonical belief
systems. Sanskrit literature and scholars did question the validity of these genres as they are the voices of the common man and their experiences. At one point of time, it was the Sanskrit language and literature that set the tone and norm for written literatures. By this norm, vernacular written literatures and folk tales were already in spaces of resistance to both hegemonic narratives and epics. One of the acknowledged reasons for such hierarchies in literatures is the opinion that vernacular and folk languages don’t have the requisite vocabulary to propound philosophy and present a refined ‘rasa’. Yet, as voices of the common man, the vernacular and the folk literatures co-existed and re-created their own spaces along with Sanskrit literature. At times, these literatures depicted socio-philosophical realisms of the common man and ways of formulating identities. For example, in Kannada literary scenario, the Vachana Movement, Dasa Sahitya questioned the hegemony of the upper caste and the Sanskrit-Brahminical rituals. In turn, Manteswamy Kavya-a folk epic questions the commitment of the Sharana Movement to its philosophy of socio-political equality in society.

But there is a shift in the way hegemony came to be scrutinized in literature after colonization. G S Shivarudrappa in Navodaya:Maruparisheelane (Navodaya: a re-assessment) observes that this questioning is essentially different from Bandaya Sahitya of the twentieth century. The earlier movements were socio-philosophical dialogues; and without undermining the relevance of this questioning of social injustices and its desirability, it is important to see the shift of focus in literature and literary criticism. Colonial education and English literary influences gave vernacular writers an assortment of literary toolkit; the bitter experiences of
colonized subject also brought in a certain objectivity in our perception of ‘self’, as subjects. This double-edged self perception, paradoxically, rooted the literary representations of realities in, especially, Kannada literature. This self-perception is specifically Postcolonial but inspired by the indigenous understanding of self as speaking subjects. A study of this self perception holds important contribution to Postcolonialism and indigenous literary studies; at the same time, contextualizing the self perception in contemporary literary scenario in the background of the primary texts helps in formulation of Folk realisms.

As history of Kannada literatures depict, along with folk literatures, vernacular writings also existed in spaces of resistance, emerging with their own poetics. But, it was during the freedom struggle that both vernacular and folk literatures played a significant role in formulating indigenous identities. The politics of language and literature that ensues within this context is an important aspect of Postcolonial query of identity and realisms. The study of Folk realisms is taken in this understanding of history of Indian literary scenario. Thus, Folk realismss takes a step towards understanding the past as seen through the journey of the folktales and writings and so, a move toward regaining indigenous ways of life and literature. This move towards indigenous researches and epistemologies is one of the contexts that the introductions to the primary texts provide. It is against these introductions that the tales and written literary narratives are to be understood and interpreted.

This contextualization creates a fissure in the narrative—between the narrations of editors and the tales and written literary narratives. The introductions
by the Editors succeed in deconstructing the context in which the folktales and writings are already bound. When they re-contextualise the folktales and writings in the contemporary, the editors position themselves as resistant readers. Narayan and Naithani read against the grain of the colonial folkloristic endeavor, deconstructing it simultaneously reconstructing it the context of the folktales and writings. Shanbhag resists the defined role of an editor presenting to the reader a generic collection of literature. As he puts together an anthology that accommodates contemporary voices in varied genres, he presents an age with its multifarious concerns and anxieties, recording multifaceted experiences and polyphonic quality of the place. These narrative fissures facilitates provided by the editors’ introduction is an opportunity to study indigenous literary scenario from its own perspectives—of concern and anxiety. All these aspects of the editors’ introduction are taken up of study in the description of the primary texts. Through their introductions, the editors place before the reader varied realisms of culture, history, literature, politics and gender.

Narayan observes that Mary Frere’s *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* is polyphonic. This polyphonic quality is an attitude of the people as well as of culture and it is structured to focus the attention of the readers on this polyphonic quality that arises from the region specific cultural memories and identities. The act of retrieval of folk tales by Sadhana Naithani, described by critics as ‘a detective research’, is a method of subjective interpretation, writing the stories of our culture and history through Folkloristics. Shanbhag’s introduction is an attempt to grasp the twentieth century Kannada literatures to understand and
interpret the contemporary literary scenario. That is, the editors are not only compiling an anthology. They are re-looking, re-interpreting, and through this process, deconstructing the texts, re-writing literary, contemporary, gender and cultural realisms. The approach and method of deconstructing the texts are different, but the purpose of acts of deconstruction through the introductions is to re-join the stories to community. This effort at re-membering the tales are carried differently in the introductions.

Kirin Narayan’s introduction functions as the larger framework which deflects embedded colonial gazes to privileges indigeneity in Mary Frere’s collection of folk tales in *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends*. Mary Frere’s publication is structured thus: Bartle Frere’s *Introduction*, then Mary Frere’s *Collector’s Apology*, followed by *The Narrator’s Narrative* in which Anna relates her life story to Mary. The penultimate section is the Folk tales and the book concludes with Bartle Frere’s notes and ethnographic explanations to the tales.

But, as Kirin Narayan edits and writes the introduction, she provides insightful understanding of Mary Frere’s *Collector’s Apology* that highlights Mary Frere’s life as the daughter of Bartle Frere, the Governor of Bombay presidency and an English woman who lived her life in to two different cultural spaces. Mary Frere’s *Collector’s Apology* to *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* discusses the native life through the eyes of the British citizen. Bartle Frere’s introduction reflects and addresses the ethnographic interest of the West. Perhaps the most interesting part of the book is *Narrator’s Narrative* where Anna speaks, sharing the story of her life and her nuanced perceptions of changes
introduced by colonial administration. This narrative is a rich source of region specific memories- folk, social, political and cultural. As seen, Mary Frere’s structured publication submerged the folktales and their realisms. And Kirin Narayan’s introduction begins with the importance of folk tales and their relationship with the people. Thus restructured, the tales regain their place and space.

Sadhana Naithani retrieves the tales from the library archives in London. It is an arduous research as she travels to England four times between 1996 and 2001 that led her to the tales. And much has to be reconstructed through the study of tales themselves. Thus, the excitement of Sadhana Naithani’s research *In Quest of Indian Folktales Ram Gharib Chaube William Crooke* is both in finding Ram Gharib Chaube, ‘who spent two decades in the archive of the Library of London’ as well as unfolding an unlikely friendship between Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke, Mirzapur district collector of revenues. This imaginative investigation reveals their intense and multilayered relationship. Sadhana Naithani says “The manuscripts led me from colonial folklore scholarship to the relationship between Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke.” (Naithani 2006: Preface)

But there are anxieties of betrayal that the editors express. Anna’s folktales as *Old Deccan Days* publication gives Mary an identity and fame while Anna is unaware of the benefits her young mistress received from publishing the tales ‘she as if in a trance’ told Mary. Of course, William Crooke neither acknowledges Chaube’s role in the mammoth collection of tales nor is Chaube’s
role in the journal *North Indian Notes and Queries* acknowledged by Crooke anywhere does bother Naithani both as an indigenous researcher. The colonial-folklorists’ enthusiasm for collection of the tales contributed to the West’s endeavor of both the formulation of tale-types and to the larger implications of exoticising of the colonized land. Mary Frere’s book paved the way for the depiction of an exotic land-India and a call for further collection of tales. Her dangerously innocent and enthusiastic appeal for colonial folklorists “Will no one go to the diggings?” (Narayan 2005: 19) spells doom for the cultural poetics of India. When the polyglot Pandit Chaube endeavors to map the terrain of Folk tales in Oudh and Northern India, he is the victim of hegemonic colonial academics. This devastating end of Chaube is also an indication of the changed dynamics of relationship between the colonizer and the colonized during the nineteenth century—the second phase of colonialism. Also, the injustices are not only to the talented, academic indigenous folklorists, but both to the folk tales that belong to the community and the poetics of the place. Recognizing such instances of injustices, works like *Old Deccan Days* and *In Quest of Indian Folktales* are conscious call for understanding the presence of the past in the contemporary and its implications to indigenous researches/studies.

In *Sirigannada*, there is a desire to introduce the readers to discourses in the twentieth century Kannada literatures, translated into English. For Shanbhag, the interest is to move towards showcasing the vernacular voices in Kannada literatures in translation; to present the region specificities in Kannada literatures. Of course, the influences of English literatures on Kannada literatures are evident
both in the use of new genres that are predominantly English, and in an awakened sense of responsibility to socio-political injustices prevalent in the society. Thus, the chosen writings in Sirigannada reveal the changes in indigeneity as the writers represent indigenous world views and epistemologies. That means, the writers’ consciousness registers global and transnational influences to indigenous system. Also, there is an urgency with which the writers foreground indigenous worldviews and epistemologies. The portrayal of this complex antithetical perspective of life remains the focus of selected writings. When Shanbhag compiles this anthology, in tracing this chief philosophical perspective of Kannada literature, there is a conscious desire to portray the indigenous ways of life and identity that are rooted in region specificities as well as a part of the history of Kannada literary scenario. Also, the choice of the writings for this anthology shows Shanbhag to be as much a part of this region specific consciousness that believes in its indigeneity as the writings themselves. Thus the writings do showcase a constant interaction of the past with the present; but this interaction does not show the anxieties of betrayal that visibly formulate the move towards indigenous researches in both Old Deccan Days and In Quest of Indian Folktales. It is this juxtaposition that provides an opportunity to understand the importance of indigenous responses and writings.

Thus, the meticulously drawn out details in the introduction indicates to the fact that the process of collection of tales commands a study of the processes of dismemberment and re-membering to understand the contemporary realisms that affect literatures. No details of the process of collection is spared; and just as these details are used to retrieve the tales, it is also used to facilitate an understanding of
the past as well as to interpret the contemporary situations that emerge from these not well understood circumstances.

So, the primary texts, studied in these varied contexts, enable a revision of discourses of historical, literary and culture realisms. This revision helps to comprehend the direction of contemporary literary discussion and also an important return to indigenous epistemologies. So, the retrieval of these folktales unmask many facets of indigenous epistemologies and the culture that forms a part of the discourses of the contemporary literary scenario. Such discourses are links to understand the varied realities of historical epochs in which these stories are situated. The primary texts lend themselves to contrapuntal reading. The stories of the journey of folktales have trajectories of early, colonial and Post-colonial discourses of realities embedded in the text. This is enabled as a dialogue is set between the stories, the editors’ narrative and the framework of contemporary literary concerns of representation and quest of identity. The study of these layers helps to formulate Folk realisms.

So, for the purposes of discussion, first the *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* and then, *In Quest of Indian Folk Tales* Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke are taken up first. And *Sirigannada* that discusses the written literary scenario and the literatures from the anthology shall be discussed as another phase in which folk tales are expressed. Also, the complexity of the texts demands this separate space. However, it is the introductions by the editors that contextualize and direct attention to indigenous epistemologies, so, move towards Folk realisms.
The meticulously drawn introductions, with each chapter detailing varied aspects of the process of collection of folk tales, begin discourses of the relationship between colonizer and indigenous folklorists. And most significantly, it moves towards building contemporary indigenous epistemologies. Secondly, the colonial folkloristic endeavor emphasizes the colonial folklorists’ efforts to collect the stories and publish it gets highlighted. This emphasis either makes the publication an ethnographic endeavor of the colonial folklorist that transforms the speaking subject to an object of study and/or submerges indigenous imaginative interpretation of life through folk tales. The Editors’ introduction to *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* and *In Quest of Indian Folk Tales* Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke disturbs this interpretation to collection of folk tales. In this disturbance, it also deconstructs the process and purpose of colonial collection of folk tales. This erases the colonial gaze and the reader gets a better picture of Folk realisms as experiences of people. Most significantly, the theoretical framework of Folk realisms emerges from the life stories documented in the two texts.

Mary Frere’s *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* was first published in March 1868. But Mary Frere’s tour of Deccan began in 1865. The only woman in the entourage accompanying her father Bartle Frere’s six hundred men, Mary Frere asked her only mate ayah Anna Liberata D’souza to entertain her with stories that Anna may, as a mother, have told her children. And Anna tells her the stories, which she, as a child, had listened to from her grandmother. And, what arose out of inevitability, Mary Frere made the best of that
opportunity—documenting the stories of Anna. Mary acknowledges that she records it for her ‘Little sister’- Catherine Francis Frere, who later drew the pictures for the tales and when the book was ready for publication, it is dedicated, first to ‘The Little Sister’ for whom the tales were written down and then ‘to all those in India who love England and to all those in England who love India’. However, it was at the time of publication that the book was structured for the benefit of the English readers. And one of the first reviews that Narayan quotes in her introduction recommends “. . . that readers secure it as a possession for which their children and their children again, will be thankful.”(Narayan 2005: vii) The journey of the Deccan folk tales in print begins from here.

There is a structure to *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* that presents the folk tales. It is—*Preface* by Mary Frere, *Introduction* by Bartle Frere, *Collector’s Apology* and *The Narrator’s Narrative* that precedes the folk tales themselves and *Notes* by Bartle Frere. Of course, the tales by themselves drew the attention of the reader to the book and *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* went on to become a classic because of the folk tales. Narayan cites this significant review in *The Examiner* in her introduction: “The book would form an appropriate present for a child, and at the same time be read with interest by persons in mature years.” (Narayan 2005: xiii) She also quotes from *The Imperial Review*: “The imperial Review praised the book’s presentation of “tales as tales” rather than reducing them to the theoretical frameworks of the time.” (Narayan 2005: xiii)

The introductions by both Mary and Bartle Frere give different facets of India as seen through two individuals speaking from different positions
and equally different concerns. Where Bartle Frere’s introduction is more
ethnographic and so, keeps the colonial gaze, Mary’s *Collector’s Apology* is the
voice of the young girl who is away from her family and aware of her position as
Sir Bartle Frere’s daughter. But, Mary Frere’s *Collector’s Apology* and recording
*The Narrator’s Narrative* are evidences of a relationship that continue to retain the
spirit of Folk tales alive. Thus, *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* keeps
the polyphonic quality of the fairy tales through the book. And Narayan’s
introduction draws attention to this ‘structured and gendered voices’. Like the folk
tales that have a story within a story that keep alive the imagination of the listener/
reader intact, the multi-layered, polyphonic introductions are resources of Folk
realisms.

At the time of its first publication as well as the present edited
publication, it is the collected stories—‘fairy legends’ as Mary Frere called them, that
draw attention of readers to the book. After the first publication, *Old Deccan Days
Or Hindoo Fairy Legends* was hailed as a classic that would provide enjoyment for
generations to come. “All those who love really good tales . . . had better buy this
book . . . secure it as a possession for which their children and their children again,
will be thankful.” (Narayan 2005: vii) Yet, paradoxically, the collection of these
richly imaginative stories that are at the centre is hardly a subject of study. Instead,
it was Bartle Frere’s introduction that gathered more attention than the stories
themselves. Possibly, more than the stories, it is Bartle Frere’s introduction that
supported the exotic picture of India that was currant. Bartle Frere’s generalized
statements, it is important to note, are emerging from his stay in India as the
Governor of Bombay presidency. The reality of his introduction intersects with the imaginative stories directing the attention of reader to this phantasmagoric India where princesses cook for the father-king (Punchkin, Tale-1) or where the Brahmin saves his life from the tiger by addressing the Jackal as ‘mama’.(The Brahman, the tiger and the six judges, Tale-14)

Though Mary Frere very boldly went on to record and publishes Anna’s narrative, the inherent voices of Anna and the poetics of Indian Folkloristics are yet to be acknowledged. Mary Frere’s *Collector’s Apology* to *Old Deccan Days Or Hindoo Fairy Legends* discusses the native life through the eyes of the British citizen. Bartle Frere’s introduction addresses the ethnographic interest of the West. Perhaps the most interesting part, apart from the imaginative stories themselves, is *The Narrator’s Narrative* where Anna speaks, sharing her life and lived experiences. Anna’s narrative is a rich foundation of region specific memories-folk, social, political, gender and cultural. Its publication it sparked off immense admiration. As one of the reviews recognizes, it was a classic. It got Mary Frere a permanent place as one of the first folklorists and the book itself a classic; the stories themselves are lost in the discourses that arise out of the colonial interests the collection of the tales.

Re-publication of *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* edited and with introduction by Kirin Narayan ensures re-membering of folk tales and its poetics to the place and people. The introduction by Narayan follows this pattern: she begins with the folk tales and their significance. She follows it up with *Anna Liberata De Souza’s Life Story, Bartle Frere as Colonial Authority, Mary Frere as*
Collector and ending her introduction with *The After Life of Old Deccan Days*. The introductory observations on folk tales reveal the significance of culture and memory both in colonial and Postcolonial contexts. It is in this section *The Folktales* that Narayan draws attention to the life of stories and journey of the stories. *Anna Liberata De Souza’s Life Story* depicts Anna’s life and her connection with the folk tales. *Bartle Frere as Colonial Authority* highlights the changes that were thrust upon the place and its repercussions on the lives of people of the Deccan Plateau. Narayan provides insightful understanding of Mary Frere as daughter of Bartle Frere—the Governor of Bombay presidency and an English woman who lived her life in two different cultural spaces in *Mary Frere as Collector*. In the last section of introduction *The After Life of Old Deccan Days* Narayan traces the ending of the three important people who made *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* happened. At the same time, she draws the attention of the reader to the fact of this book as a landmark in a folkloristic endeavor. As she notes in her introduction, later colonial folkloristic collections became more rigid in their search of ‘authentic’ folk tales and so lost some of the complex dimensions of Indian Folk realismss in this search for authenticity.

As Narayan traces the afterlife of *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends*, the complex relationship of folk tales with Life—memory, time, place and space are retained. It is a fact that Folklores exist in multi-dimensions and multi-voices; this happens because folklores—especially folk tales—emerge and thrive with people. Thus folk and tales share a symbiotic relationship and can’t survive apart. The introduction recognizes re-membering as key to the survivance of
folklores in the contemporary scenario- a step towards keeping the movement of folk tales alive, in a changed new scenario. And so, Narayan’s introduction begins with the importance of folk tales and its relationship with the people. Thus restructured, the concurrent discussions of tales help to regain their place and space. At the same time, it is important to question the significance of collection of folk tales by the colonizer. When Mary Frere started writing down stories told by Anna, typification of tales was already in progress. What began as a Folkloristic endeavor and zeal to preserve folklores contributed to the anthropological theories of cultural evolution. And colonial folkloristic endeavor supported this European project.

*Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* was immensely popular at the time of its first publication and continues to enjoy similar popularity. But, there is a definite need to probe and understand the reasons for its immense popularity. *Old Deccan Days* is the first of the colonial folkloristic endeavor of collection of tales on field. It became popular as soon as it was published –was considered a classic actually. Of course, it is acknowledged that the success of the book primarily is in the imaginative tales that Anna related. Also acknowledged is the fact that when these ‘fairy legends’ in London was published, it is the introduction and notes by ‘The Late Rt. Hon. Sir Bartle Frere, Bart. G.C.B., G.C.S., Erc.’ that lent the book its scholarly appearance. Just as Narayan in her introduction observes that these tales were not simply told, but told to Mary Frere, Bartle Frere’s introduction is written to his readers in Britain. Contextualizing his introduction is also a step toward studying the process that created the exoticized India. Apparently, the process of exoticization of cultures continues to exist. At this point,
it is pertinent to look for the implication of exoticization. Graham Huggan notes in
the preface to *Postcolonial Exotic Marketing the Margins*:

> When literary works like Chinua Achebe’s Things Fall Apart (1958) are gleaned, despite their fictional status, for the anthropological information they provide: when academic concepts like post colonialism are turned, despite their historicist pretensions, into watchwords for the fashionable study of cultural otherness —all of these are instances of the Postcolonial exotic, of the global commodification of cultural difference that provides the subject of this book. The Postcolonial Exotic is, in part, an examination of the sociological dimensions of Postcolonial studies: the material conditions of production and consumption of Postcolonial writings, and the influence of publishing houses and academic institutions on the selection, distribution and evaluation of these works. (Huggan 2001: vii)

With this understanding of the process of exoticization, Bartle Frere’s introduction needs to be studied. Some of the factual information shared —historical and cultural—is gathered from his experiences of being part of the colonial administration. His description of the popular beliefs – be it the worship of Vithoba, Bairoba, the belief in Rakshas or his account of the Marata war in the *Notes*—were meant for the benefit of the British reader. His observations on the beautiful geography and cultural diversity simply consolidate the already prevalent
tendency to exoticize the colonized place and cultural politics of ethnographic observations. Also, his introduction is a set of generalized statements that lack both sharp observation and insight. For example, introducing Anna as a Lingaet, Bartle Frere makes these observations:

The Lingaets form one of the most strongly marked divisions of the Hindoo races south of the river Kistna. They are generally well-favored, well-to-do people, noticeable for their superior frugality, intelligence, and industry, and for the way in which they combine and act together as a separate body apart from other Hindoos. They have many peculiarities of costume, of social ceremony, and of religion, which strike even a casual observer; and though clearly not aboriginal, they seem to have much ground for their claim to belong to a more ancient race . . . (Narayan 2006:12) Emphasis added

His observations consist of no further explanation of any peculiarities. There are no supporting evidences either as explanation or further information regarding the Lingaet people. The details of culture specificities are completely absent from this statement. In absence of explanations, it is nothing more than a quasi-ethnographic colonial gaze.

Bartle Frere begins by noting the necessity of his introduction, apart from The Narrator's Narrative and The Collector's Apology. The introduction, written to his countrymen, consists of generalized information regarding the place, certain practices and beliefs specifically of the lower castes, as Frere identifies them. It is interesting to note here that colonial folklorists- Bartle Frere, Richard
Carnac Temple and William Crooke—similarly identify the differences between the ‘Brahminical’ and the ‘lower castes’ rituals and everyday life practices. A study of the colonial folklorists’ endeavor in this direction helps to understand the politics of collection of folk tales as well as cultural imperialisms. These, along with the folk tales, helps to recognize the dynamics of shared amongst people during the colonial period and understand the directions of change that are shaping the contemporary realisms.

Bartle Frere’s introduction also deals with some of the common/popular knowledge of folk tales. For example, he gives a detailed description of the fear of the Indians for the supernatural presences—rakshas. He likens these beings to similar exotic beings from different cultures. For example, based on their habit of eating dead bodies, Bartle Frere likens them to the ‘Arabian Ghoul’; “. . . while the simplicity and stupidity which qualify the supernatural powers of the Rakshas . . . will recall many humorous passages in which giants figure in our own Norse and Teutonic legends.” (Narayan 2005:14) He observes that “The English reader must bear in mind that in India beings of this or of a very similar nature are not mere traditions of the past, but they form an important part of the existing practical belief of the lower orders.” And he continues to observe how even grown men refuse to accompany him when they believed that a place was haunted by these supernatural beings. Of course, Bartle Frere traces similar superstitious beliefs ‘still current within forty years, when I was a boy, on the border of Wales.’ (Narayan 2005:16) Then he notes that another being that is equally important in the supernatural personages is the cobra.
The cobra, unless disturbed, rarely goes far from home, and is supposed to watch jealously over a hidden treasure. He is in the estimation of the lower classes invested with supernatural powers, and according to the treatment he receives he builds up or destroys the fortunes of the house to which he belongs. No native will willingly kill him if he can get rid of him in any other way; . . . (Narayan 2005:17)

Open-ended observations as these are, it did create and cater to the exotic picture of both India and Indians through Folkloristics. Cultural and folkloristic information as these, instead of directing attention to cultural differences, paved way for cultural-ethnographic politics as well as creating an exotic colony against which the development of the West was measured and held up as evolved cultural centres.

Against this picture of India that Bartle Frere’s introduction presents, Narayan’s introduction lends itself to contrapuntal reading. She begins with the fact of how the introduction by “Sir Bartle Frere, a famous, high ranking, and outspoken British administrator in India” transforms “the book from a collection made by a young girl into an authoritative statement about Indian life and culture in the context of the nineteenth-century British colonial aims.” (Narayan 2005: xviii) But, as she traces the details of the life story of Bartle Frere as Administrator in India, it is also possible to discern the journey of Deccan from its own native kings to what Bartle Frere terms as ‘modern history’. Also, through the story of Bartle Frere, it is possible to delineate the colonial history of India as it was happening during the period 1815-1884. And, as it discusses the role of Bartle Frere as a colonial master-
administrator—his achievements and failures, it also presents colonization as a system that chose its people with precision for its requirement of the colonial trade. In such a situation, Mary Frere’s collection of tales acquires double signification. It was a past-time that was much required to distract her away from the dreary realities of her father’s position. And the introduction by Bartle Frere authenticates not just Mary’s collection, but the colonial folkloristic endeavor too. At the same time, in this context *Old Deccan Days* demonstrates the survivance of folk and folktales.

The colonial rule interfered with the life of people by shifting the standardization—the British were the new and right standard that the ‘native’ was shown. The standardization was constructed through varied methodologies. Restructuring the place was one of the main methods that supported constructing an alternative identity for the Indians. Cultural Memory Studies identifies ‘the sites of memory’ as central to identity creation. When the colonial administrator took over from the native ruler, one of the first changes was with architectural constructions. He either changed the existing architecture or he destroyed it for his own purposes. And the challenge for the folklores was to survive in the absence of such important sites of memory. It is also one of the background in which *Old Deccan Days* has to be understood and studied.

The following are the details of Bartle Frere’s career and life. He joined civil service branch of East India Company in 1834. “...Bartle Frere rose through diverse positions as Assistant Collector and Assistant Revenue Collector before he was appointed secretary to Sir George Arthur,
the incoming governor of Bombay Presidency in 1842.” (Narayan 2005:xix) And he married Arthur’s second daughter – Catherine in 1884. In fact, their wedding day is memorable as it coincides “... with uprising in the Deccan that resulted in the second Maratha war; since Sir George had to preside over a council for a decision on how the British should respond, the wedding was suspended for an hour or so.” (Narayan 2005:xviii) He introduced the first postage stamp in India; won public praise in 1857 when he sent troops from Sind to suppress revolt in Punjab. He was appointed to the Council of the Governor General of India in 1859. Narayan notes “British colonial relations with Indians at this time were marked by distrust and a growing racism, yet Frere argued for greater Indian participation in government. In Frere’s words, any respectable native gentlemen or merchant “would give us the most valuable aid by looking at questions from a Native point of view.” (Narayan 2005:xix) In 1862, he was appointed governor of Bombay Presidency which two decades earlier his father-in-law filled. “1860’s marked a tremendous growth for the city of Bombay. ... he built up Bombay as the port through which this cotton was shipped. In the prosperity generated by increased trade, rich and poor alike came to seek their fortunes in Bombay, where it was said that Lakshmi (Goddess of Good Fortune) was dancing.” (Narayan 2005: xix) Also, “In this period, Frere pulled down the old fort that surrounded Bombay and established the first city municipality.” But, “With the end of American Civil War in 1865, Bombay markets crashed. Bartle Frere was widely blamed for not having reined in the giddy financial speculation and not managing to save the Bombay Bank.” (Narayan 2005: xix) In a short outline of his career provided here, it is possible to notice the
mutation the Deccan was undergoing. The colonial rule brought about changes not only in administration but also in its geography, and the new economics altered the life of the Deccan plateau irrevocably. The alterations refer not only to the way Bombay was perceived –‘the abode of Goddess Lakshmi’, but to the way the people related to the place itself. The destruction of the fort also implied a certain destruction of the existing folklore as well. The collection of Folktales contextualized in this colonial historical background, presents a conflicting/paradoxical relationship between the survivance of folktales and the realities of world.

A study of Mary Frere’s apology reveals varied complexities of colonial relationships. Firstly, Mary Frere recalls the occasion of the request of tales to Anna, her ayah:

My mother being at the time absent in England, I chanced to be the only lady of the party. Anna Liberata de Souza, my native ayah went with me. . . . As there was no other lady in the camp, and I sometimes had no lady visitors for some days together, I was necessarily much alone. One day, being tired of reading, writing and sketching, I asked Anna, my constant attendant, whose caste (the Lingaet) belonged to the part of the country that we were traversing, if she could not tell me a story? (Narayan 2005: 9-10)

And, as Narayan observes, this is no ‘typified’ master-slave relationship. She notes:

. . . Perhaps, having been raised more in England than in British India –rife with racist colonial assumptions at mid
century—made Mary more perceptive of Anna as a more complex human being rather than just a servant. Perhaps Anna’s being Christian, speaking expressive if broken English, and vocally espousing a history of family loyalty to the British colonial project made her seem less “other”. In any event, it is remarkable that Mary was able to break through the limiting typification of her time to view Anna as a speaking subject: a person with a past, with opinions, and with emotional attachments to the oral traditions she narrated.

... (Narayan 2005: xxiii)

And Narayan’s introduction, elaborating on Mary’s experiences quoted earlier, supports the difference in this colonial relationship. In her exposition, Narayan highlights the difference in response to Indians between the British and the British as a colonial master. And Mary, as a British, see’s Anna as a ‘speaking subject’; but what helps Mary to see Anna as a speaking subject, and, in fact binds them together at this point of time, is folk tales. The tales gives them the space both are looking for—a path away from dreary realities of their lives. Both the women, in the face of loneliness, seek solace in tales that are imaginative and so provide space from their bleak realities. Thus, the tales create a space in which Anna and Mary connect with the memories of their people and land. Mary’s acknowledges this through her ‘apology’ and Anna through sharing her life with Mary as Mary records it as The Narrator’s Narrative. So, in this journey of collection of tales, both the narrators record the contemporary histories as part of their lives as well as creating
a history of their own. It is here that Folkloristics differs from ‘History’. In the written ‘histories’, the contemporary enters later as historical facts, Folkloristics presents the contemporary as history. For example, in *Narrator’s Narrative* Anna makes this observation regarding changes in economics that entered India with colonial rule—

In those days house rent did not cost more than half a rupee a month, and you could build a very comfortable house for a hundred rupees. .

. . Grain now a rupee a pound, was then two annas a pound. Common sugar, then one anna a pound, is now worth four annas a pound. . . . Four anna’s worth of salt, chillies, tamarinds, onions and garlic, would then last a family a whole month, now the same money would not buy a week’s supply. . . The English fixed the rupee to the whole value of sixteen annas; in those days there were big annas and some little ones, and you could get twenty-two annas for a rupee.

(Narayan 2005: 22)

Ironically, Mary Frere’s attempt at this book itself is an effort to be the speaking subject. It is interesting to note how Bartle Frere addresses his daughter’s unique collection of tales. Narayan notes the occasion of Bartle Frere’s introduction to *Old Deccan Days*:

Bartle Frere ended his term in Bombay in January 1867. In the autumn of that same year, he corresponded with John Murray regarding the publication of his daughter’s book and ended up writing the introduction. Drawing on his years of colonial service in
the Deccan, Bartle Frere used the introduction to provide a knowledgeable overview, and to issue general statements enlivened by concrete examples from his own experience. (Narayan 2005: xx)

Interestingly, Bartle Frere pointed out that though there were extensive British accounts of the natural features and monuments south of the river Krishna, little was known, let alone available for the general reader, “of the inner life of the people, past or present, of their social peculiarities and popular beliefs.” (Narayan 2005: xx) And yet, “Frere stated in a curious, belittling twist that his daughter’s book did not quite pass muster for the salvage project he proposed. He writes “. . . the object of the collector being amusement than antiquarian research, any light which is thrown on the popular superstitions of the country is only incidental.” (Narayan 2005: xx-xxi) The patriarchal gaze that privileged the world view of men, negating the perceptions of a woman scuttles the voices of women. The gender politics of erasure—of voice and visibility, evident in these observations, are countered by both Mary Frere’s Collector’s Apology and The Narrator’s Narrative. Interestingly, the stories Anna relates to Mary and those Mary appreciates are the stories in which women boldly act and win—viz. Brave Seventee Bai (Tale no-3). There is no stereotypical presentation of woman either as helpless or as a super-woman, who was capable of extraordinary feats. There are different representations of both men and women—Punch-Phul Ranee (Tale no-9)—the story of witty princess, The Jackal, The Barber, And The Brahman Who Had Seven Daughters (Tale no-12) that speaks of the indifferent patriarchy and The Selfish Sparrow And The Houseless Crows (Tale no-15) which talks of the cruelty of
woman. (There is a detailed analysis of this story by Alan Dundes in which this story is discussed as caste prejudices in his essay titled *Two Tales Of Crow And Sparrow A Freudian Folkloristic Essay On Caste And Untouchability, Rowman And Littlefield Publishers, Inc, 1997*)

The discourses of realisms- folkloristic, gender, Postcolonial history- are re-induced by Narayan through editing and writing an introduction. As the attention is re-focused on the stories and journey of life of people, a different dimension of response to Postcolonial discourses emerge. Narayan observes the journey of tales through the collection of tales. As Anna tells Mary ‘fairy legends’, the stories see multiple translations- not only after publication but during the process of collection itself. The stories Anna tells Mary were told to her by her grandmother, originally from the Lingaet from Karnataka. And the stories “were told to her in “our Calicut language”-perhaps some mixture of Malayalam and Kannada. For Mary to follow, Anna retold the stories in self-taught English mixed with Hindustani. . . .” (Narayan 2005: xi) Not only does Anna refine the language for the convenience of communication, Mary further smoothened the language to suit the contemporary conventions of English language usage. Thus “*mara baparee*” becomes “*Mera Bap Reh!*”; “bangle waller” the bangle-seller is rendered as “*bangle-wallah*”; also, there was an effort to keep to the authenticate Hindustani usage-*Rajah* is retained in place of King (Narayan 2005: xi). What is witnessed in such instances is the survivance of folk in its ability to adapt to contemporary scenario. And it is this adaptive ability that lends folk tales to study the age and its influences in their use of language. This reference to language contains historical
details as well as the journey of story through languages and realities. And discernibly, in this journey of the stories, are entwined the realities of people and realisms of society. *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* edited with an introduction by Kirin Narayan resuscitates poetics of stories and realisms- of culture, gender and history- through the immensely imaginative stories.

The excitement of Sadhana Naithani’s research *In Quest of Indian Folktales Ram Gharib Chaube William Crooke* is both in finding Ram Gharib Chaube, ‘who spent two decades in the archive of the Library of London’ as well as unfolding an unlikely friendship between Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke, Mirzapur district collector of revenues. This ‘imaginative investigation’ reveals their intense and multilayered relationship. Sadhana Naithani says “The manuscripts led me from colonial folklore scholarship to the relationship between Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke.” (Naithani 2006: Preface)

The book is neatly structured into two parts. The first part has four chapters and the second part consists of the 158 collected folktales. Each chapter in the first part explores and exposes various facets of Chaube-Crooke relationship. At the same time, the angsts of this relationship are enlarged to interrogate the larger socio-political realisms. This sets the imagination of the reader to re-think Postcolonialism in the context of everyday life and its effect on the common man. Naithani observes “. . . Or was the chaos only the micro-level reflection of the chaos prevailing and growing at the macro level of colonial education policies and practices? The (Indian) folklore studies which he had developed helped establish
were to flourish in England, while folklore studies in India would not gain an
identity of their own until the end of the twentieth century.” (Naithani 2006:14)

Each chapter unravels varied facets of the relationship between
Chaube, Crooke and folk tales that brought them together. The discussions that
emerge out of the discovery of this unique relationship support contextual
understanding of Postcolonialism as well as the retrieving indigenous
epistemologies. These discussions take the reader through a roller-coaster ride — of
wonder at the vision of two academicians who almost gave the cultural turn in
Folkloristics; of thoughtfulness- as a possible opportunity to re-think modernism in
India in the context of Folkloristics; of the significance of cultural memory, of re-
examining existing discourses in Postcolonial studies, of translations and of course,
of storytelling itself. That is, the story of collection of folk tales by Chaube and
Crooke acts as a platform to discuss Folk realisms behind the story of the journey of
folk tales themselves from India to the archives of the library in London for over a
century.

In re-telling this story, Naithani dons many roles-that of a curator
who preserves the valuable antique works of art; that of a careful editor, who is a
nuanced reader; that of a narrator who retrieves tales that are archived to re-tell
them in the present. Although the tales themselves are not time bound, the
collection is a part of colonial folkloristic endeavor. This endeavor could not have
materialized without the scholarly interest of Chaube and Crooke. And Naithani
takes a Postcolonial position as she interrogates and discusses the implication of
this collection of tales. Thus Naithani’s research work presents a trajectory of the periods in India enabling new direction to indigenous researches.

The first chapter, titled *Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube and William Crooke* introduces and discusses the relationship of Chaube and Crooke by probing it from varied positions—as an academic association in the context of Folkloristics to the different destinies for two people as they journey together connected by their common academic interest and an exposition of cultural politics. This relationship, begun sometime during 1891 or 92 that continued intensely for the next four years, indicates to a multilayered interaction of the British in India with Indians; and in this instance, this multilayered interactive attitude was the catalyst that framed the context of collection of folktales. Secondly, it is also the journey of two people whose nature of academic interests connects them intimately with the immediate socio-political realities of their time. Their journey reached diverse destinations; yet, the collection of folk tales brought them together, even after spending a century apart from each other in the archives of the library of Folklore Society.

Though Naithani probes this relationship from the Postcolonial perspective, the discussion of folktales that formulate the framework of this research moves in the direction of indigenous studies. That is, the shift emanating from the discourses of *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends* to *In Quest of Folktales* is in the fact that the latter is rooted in the Postcolonial critique of Chaube-Crooke association in their folkloristic endeavor. While Anna narrated folk tales to upon Mary’s request and slowly grew into the *Old Deccan Days or Hindoo Fairy Legends*, the intention of *In Quest of Folktales* is quite openly a part of
colonial folkloristic endeavor. Thus, *In Quest of Folktales* lends itself more to literary critical theoretical discourses. But, it must be noted that even these discourses emerge in the context of the collection of folktales—indigenous epistemologies.

When Chaube and Crooke met, the memory of 1857 ‘mutiny’ was still alive in the minds of Indians and the British. Begun in this period of anxiety, their relationship moves through to that period of colonization in which the British hold on India intensified by implementation of rigid rules of administration which broke the complex relationship between the British and the Indians, to simplistic Postcolonial binary question of identity. In the contemporary literary scenario, this historic specificity is an opportunity to examine closely a transnational dialogue of the relationship of folk to Folkloristics and a politics of the exotic in and through folk tales. A probe of this association is a means of understanding the history of India—Colonial, Postcolonial and contemporary in the context of cultural politics and indigenous identity.

An interest in folk tales for academic purposes brought Chaube and Crooke together to collect folk tales. This collection of folk tales had a definite purpose; for Crooke, documenting the tales meticulously meant contribution to European Folkloristics. In spite of the fact that their collection of folktales and visualizing its role in global space the stories and one of their chief collectors-Chaube were to be in the archives of the library for exactly one hundred years. The discovery of these stories opens the trauma of colonization and a process of remembering the tales and the teller to Indian Folkloristics. Thus, Naithani’s book is
an example of indigenous research- telling our tales to re-member them to our history and people; it is important to evolve a research methodology, to understand the significance and relevance of such researches as this.

The folk tales, retrieved from the archives of the library, gives a picture of the fabric of Indian society. Of course, any collection of folk tales, given the contemporaneity of folk tales, seems made-up and so, to a certain extent, presents a vision of a dormant past. However, the discussions in Postcolonial Studies are also about retrieving indigenous identity/identities. And Naithani’s research is a move towards a closer look at indigenous life and knowledge in the background of the collection of folk tales that are published in this book as well as an example of indigenous research.

Naithani begins the first chapter like the first sentence in a folk tale. “Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube met William Crooke sometime in 1891 or 1892, and somewhere in the North Western Provinces and Oudh.” (Naithani 2006: 5) When the two protagonists meet, Crooke is ‘mesmerized’ by the polyglot Pandit Chaube and Chaube looks to Crooke as a co-academician. Chaube has ‘yet-unused scholarly skills’ (Naithani 2006:6) of collecting information and a vision much ahead of his time, whereas Crooke was an accomplished student equipped with the knowledge of Anthropology. Crooke, very much a colonial master, had defined interests. He was sure of the importance of collecting information through and as folk tales –Folkloristics was a means to gather knowledge about people’s belief systems and cultural codes that are important to understand people and their modes of communication. And Crooke’s journals Popular Religion and Folklore and North
**Indian Notes and Queries** are noted for being ahead of the contemporary understanding of India. Naithani quotes from Crooke’s journal “Many books have been written on Brahmanism, or the official religion of the Hindus; as far as I am aware, this is the first attempt to bring together some of the information available on the popular beliefs of the races of Northern India. (Crooke 1894, ii)” (Naithani 2006: 8) The popularity of this journal together with the fact that this was abandoned after Crooke’s retirement points to the fact that Crooke was a unique scholar, whose scholarly intentions could only be completed with the help of a similar scholar, Chaube. But of Chaube himself, the only source of information are the fifty page of letter written to Crooke and in Indian literary history itself, “. . . he is remembered by Ram Chandra Shukl in his biography of Chaube, Shukl’s son and nephew describe Pandit Ram Gharib Chaube as the person who was involved in research for William Crookes’ *Tribes and castes of the North Western Provinces.*” (Naithani 2006: 11) He was remembered by an old woman of his village Gopalpur as the one who died having collected a bag full of papers.

It is interesting note that Chaube and Crooke share some noticeably interesting similarities. Both had the same bachelor’s degree-Bachelor of Arts; their alma maters (Presidency College in Calcutta and Trinity College in Dublin) were part of the same colonial aspirations; they shared an active interest in collecting folk tales which had its roots in their ambitious aspirations in Folkloristics; undoubtedly scholars, both were eager and willing to systematize their interest and knowledge of folktales in order to shape and contribute to the discourses already shaping in Europe; most significantly, as Naithani observes, they were writing about each
other’s country. Such similarities in people so different as Chaube and Crooke encourage a rethinking of existing epistemologies – of colonial, historical and linguistic realities of this colonial period. The re-thinking reveals a new facet of the dynamics that existed between two individuals who also were part of the discourse of colonizer and colonized. Thus the relationship between the two scholars has to be understood in the background of colonial folklore scholarship.

Naithani quotes from Chaube’s fifty page letter to William Crooke, recalling the time they spent together. Chaube “remember[s] with gratitude, an incident of my life in Your Worship’s company which I never forget. Daily in cold weather tours when I mounted the elephant with Your Worship I had no other covering for my legs than the trousers I put on. Your Worship daily used to watch it and with your own hands very kingly covered my legs with the same blanket that covered yours. (MS139)” (Naithani 2006:10) Some of the expressions like ‘remember[s] with gratitude’, ‘Your Worship’ sound dangerously familiar to the ‘colonizer-native’ vocabulary. But the sub-text of affection that Chaube recognizes in Crooke and dignity with which Chaube writes recalling this incident indicates that the dynamics of this relationship was on equal footing. Obviously, folkloristic scholarship and an assurance of his vision is the basis of Chaube’s confidence in his approach to Crooke.

Thus, much information about Chaube comes to us through Crooke’s work and the fifty page letter written by Chaube. This reiterates the deep rooted dismembering that shaped the colonial period and the cause of Postcolonial anxiety of betrayal. Writing of folklore of India, Crooke became the editor of the
prestigious Folklore Society and Chaube, who was the reason for this mammoth collection of folktales that kept Crooke’s vision for Folkloristics alive, died insane, with a bag full of papers, unrecognized for his genius. Like a folk tale, this holds a mirror to the horror of colonial scholarship. Writing about each other’s nation and culture, the locations of cultural power spaces had different destinies for its protagonists. This is a pointer to the destinies of many similarly talented individuals who were part of the colonial/English education. It is not merely the politics of colonial education; it is also about a new set of people who had it all with them but got nothing out of it. This trauma is what needs to be examined and understood as part of Postcolonial studies.

Just like a folk tale that gets situated in the context as it progresses, this relationship which begins from shared academic enthusiasm, seen from different locales, acquires multiple dimensions. One thread of this story reveals colonial interference and betrayal; a second thread, embedded in the narrative leads us to a study of society and the discourses in relation to this relationship. Like a folktale, it is multidimensional, encouraging a probe into the active relationship of folktales with the history of the nation—literary, political, social and psychological. Discussions in these disciplines, to mention a few, have generated, contributed and shaped the discourses in realisms in the past century. In this context it is important to recognize that a discussion of this relationship highlights a significant correlation of realisms.

The background that needs to be recognized is not just colonization but the ‘mutiny’ or ‘the first war of independence that shook northern India in
1857-8. When the two Folklorists met, the reverberations of the ‘mutiny’ were still felt both by the Indians and the British. Historians Barbara D Metcalf and Thomas R Metcalf in *A Concise History of Modern India* observe-

> Within the existing British Empire, furthermore, rule over a vast indigenous population such as that of India was unprecedented. With the partial exception of Ireland, Britain’s previous imperial expansion, in the West Indies and North America, had involved the dispossession of the native peoples in favor of settlers from Europe and Africa. Hence, as they confronted their new responsibilities in India, the British found themselves sailing in wholly uncharted waters. Their difficulties were further enhanced by the reluctance of the Company’s agents in India to abandon their profitable trading activities for the uncertain advantages of government. Linked to the appointment of Hastings as governor-general, therefore, was the first of a series of Regulating Acts, which endeavored to subordinate the Company to the British Government, and to impose upon its agents the obligation of ruling . . . (Metcalf 2006: 57)

And this, along with a different perspective provided by Chaube-Crooke relationship, is a significant opportunity to re-think canonical understanding of colonization and its discourses. This is so precisely because the re-thinking clarifies the meaning and significance of being Indigenous and indigenous researches. Of
course, this does not mean negation of colonial interferences that changed India. Chaube and Crooke were a part of the colonial system, yet were more than a native and a colonizer when they came together for the purposes of academics. They were visionary academicians in the field of Folkloristics, aware of the global discourses in this discipline, eager to contribute to it. But what does get highlighted is the Postcolonial anxiety of betrayal and dismembered from both acknowledgement of scholarship and contribution.

In this connection, the most significant fact is the background in which the two met. Naithani observes ‘. . . when Crooke arrived, the 1857 revolt was still alive in the lore of the people and also in the lore of the British, who continually feared that another such revolt might be lurking around the corner. . . . Crooke’s contemporaries, such as Richard Carnic Temple, felt that a collection of folklore would reveal the mind of the people.’ (Naithani 2006: 6) This also accounts for the increased interest in the collection folk tales. Crooke, a student of Anthropology, interested in folk tales and an ICS, is not only aware of the implications of such complex interests as he has; it also indicates his willingness to participate and provide a new direction to the existing discourses in Folkloristics and Anthropology. The collection of folk tales was also beneficial to colonial rule, as it revealed the mind of the ruled. Yet, at the end of it, he doesn’t seem to have benefitted in his position as an ICS, though he was the Editor of the famed Journal of Folklore till his demise.

However, there are questions that are unanswered: what was his personal relationship with the collection of folktales? Did he too, like Temple,
believe that folk tale was a way to understand people and their culture that could be used against the colonized? Or was this the project of a student of Anthropology?

And each position gives a different perspective of Crooke as well as new perspective to Folkloristics. It might be a combination of all these premises. Such questions help to understand the complex counter movements that were in progress during colonization. The politics of academics was double barreled. On the one hand, the academic was shaped to benefit the colonizing process and at the same time, it sets off the process of dismembering of the native from their indigenous epistemology to subjugate them. This exercise was in opposition to the political movement that was opposing the colonial rule and called for native-identities. Thus, Chaube-Crooke relationship that began with the backdrop of colonial enterprise and perhaps ended in the same political scenario transcended such implications during their association of collection of folk tales itself. Crooke is a representative face of that tiny cadre of ICS officers who were powerful. He was one of those officers who were critical of the State policies.

Crooke’s memorialists (Temple 1924, Rose 1924) and scholars (Amin 1989, Raheja 1996) have said that his career was stalled in the Indian Civil Service because he was a critic of the Secretariat. But neither they nor any of the Crooke scholars have found any official evidence of this. While Crooke’s published writing do not articulate any critique of government policies, the lectures he gave in his post-retirement years do criticize state policies toward the tribal
population and oriental studies’ ignorance of popular culture.

(Naithani 2006: 8)

Such positioning provides an opportunity to probe and reveal a novel perspective to the relationship of the colonizer and the colonized.

For Chaube, it was different ballgame altogether. A polyglot who knew his Awadhi, Bhojpuri, Hindi, Persian, Sanskrit and English, he is a representative of the dynamic co-existence of geographical-linguistic realities. When Crooke meets Chaube, Chaube is a scholar, whose skills were yet to be used. So Chaube was the source of Crookes’ ambitious project of assorting the massive collection of folktales into tale types. That he was a man of vision, much ahead of his time is visible not only in the systematic collection of folktales which form the core of this book but also in his purpose of setting a counter to Orientalism-Occidentalism. (Naithani 2006) He had planned to write the biographies of some the most influential British officers he came in contact with in his work. Chaube’s presence in such a colonial-global academic transactions, his poignant letters written to Crooke and his death are anything but an indication of a systematic but gradual change that was taking place in India. This new identity, obviously, arises out of colonial presence and colonial education. This relationship indeed reveals a new side of colonization. Chaube is a representative of the new elite who had access to European systems of discourses but as the colonized, neither benefited nor recognized for their scholarship. It is evident in the manner it benefited Crooke.

William Crooke, a British Civil Servant, is a prototype of the British colonization. ‘Born to English parents living in Ireland . . . he joined the ICS in 1871, he was
posted to the North Western Provinces and Oudh.’ (Naithani 2006: 6) His interest and vision in collection of folktales was directed by the kinds of discussions that were shaping up in Europe in Anthropology and Folkloristics itself. Yet, he was already a face of colonial power and in the global space for his position and knowledge. Thus the advantages of Crooke’s position were far greater compared to Chaube, who thought and worked much ahead of his time.

In the second chapter *The golden manuscripts*, Naithani analyses the retrieved collection of 158 folk tales. She presents an analysis of the documentation of the folk tales as Chaube and Crooke had envisaged it. For example, she notes that each collected story records not just the name of narrator, but their caste, profession and their place. And of course, the collected tales were translated into ‘foreign language-English’ by Chaube. Crooke provided titles for each tale and a glossary/an explanation of a native phrase, wherever necessary. Such a detailed collection makes the intention quite clear- they were collected for the purposes of research. It may have been to formulate a tale-type or a visionary treatise that understood Folkloristics as region specific culture and so, arrive at cultural differences and spatiality. What supports this idea is the very structured collection of tales because evidently academic; also, this was the time in Europe when Anthropology, Sociology and literature were much discussed and shaped many discourses in European society.

In the third chapter *Crooke, Chaube and Colonial Folkloristics*, she revisits the European history of Folkloristics and the contribution of the British in collecting the folktales. The collected folktales created an image of India that was
romanticized. Thus, the representation of India and Indians were what the colonizer saw and wanted to represent; not the India of the Indians, they remained unheard. “…Indian folklore was rich and ancient, but was about to disappear. The collector was the one who could reach India, rule Indians, and rescue, preserve and decode their lore. The colonialists created a new folklore—a folklore called India.” (Naithani 2006:55) The contribution of this investigative narrative checkmates such hegemony by its constant probing and exposition of the contribution of Chaube to Crookes collection of folktales.

The last chapter of Part-1, *Post-Colonial Conclusion*, Naithani deconstructs the position of the Indian Folkloristics in the History of Folkloristics. She asks “To which tradition of scholarship do the Indian associates of British Folkloristics belong? Colonial Folkloristics was based both in India and in Britain, and it involved collectors, publishers and readers across continents.” (Naithani 2006: 56) By rising and drawing attention to the divide that is caused because of the colonial rule in academics she highlights the importance of the ‘intercultural hermeneutics’-the diverse elements that are responsible for the production of these discourses.

Part-II, the bulk of the book, has 158 folktales that are carefully grouped ‘Colours of Life’, ‘So wise some women Are’, ‘Magical Mind’ and ‘Corrective Measures’. This structure is the vision of Chaube and Crooke. Naithani retains the structure of the tales and this allows her to set up a dialogue not only within each folktale but with the entire of the Part-I. This dialogic approach is delightful to unearth many new dimensions to the various debates that the discovery
and placement of Chaube. Naithani also executes her fine editorial skills here. Not only has the structure of the folktales retained carefully, the grouping of the folktales are retained as well. The meticulous following of ethical practices speaks of the significance of this practice to academic professionalism. This is evident in the way the Bibliographical references and the Indexes are organized as well.

Both Narayan and Naithani retain the structures of the collection of folk tales as envisioned by the colonial folklorist-editors. This sets-off the contrast between the colonial folkloristic endeavor, the loss of indigenous epistemology and the necessity of re-membering the tales. Just as destruction of architecture was instrumental in dismembering indigenous people from their epistemologies, reconstructing the folkloristic architecture through folktales is one way of moving toward indigenous researches and epistemologies. The two primary texts move in this direction.

_Sirigannada, Contemporary Kannada Writings_ Ed by Vivek Shanbhag in this context is a unique anthology. The anthology showcases a wide range of discussion in the twentieth century Kannada literature. He describes this anthology as ‘A carpet of assorted weaves’. The metaphor acts as a rationale for selection of stories to present it to the non-Kannada readers as well as a representative spirit of Kannada literature. The anthology begins its cartography with U R Ananthamurthy’s short story _Kaararoopî_ and concludes with H S Shivaprakash’s poem _I’ll Be Right Back_. That is, anthology begins with a writer who began writing in the Navya tradition and moved on to the contemporary, to conclude with a writer who begins to write at end of the Navya tradition who
continues to write in the twenty-first century. The anthology includes short stories, poems, essays-critical and personal, and excerpts from drama and novel. This variety depicts the wide range of experiences, socio-literary experiments that were enthusiastically taken up and an array of debates that assess the direction of literature as well as socio-political thoughts. The complex responses to transitions taking place succeed in presenting the innermost life of the place. It captures the spirit of the place and the cultural spaces at the same time. The anthology showcases the journey of the indigenous people in the twentieth century and so provides an opportunity to study multi-dimensional cultural memories of the place and explore perspectives of native’s subjectivity in contemporary perspective.

Writing the introduction to *Sirigannada*, Vivek Shanbhag presents the past two decades of literary output. Likening the anthology to carpet of assorted weavings, he draws attention to the diversity of literary writings and to the spatiality that is created by diverse responses to modernization. “. . . I would like to say that these two decades, for me, are not merely physical time, but also an evolution in perception. . . .” (Shanbhag 2010: 4) This spatiality is important to break stereotypical idea of an anthology; it is essential to present the polyphonic attitude and the zeal of the period.

The Navya (Modern) period infused socio-political consciousness to Kannada literary writings. Writer’s proactively questioned detrimental attitudes of the society with respect to caste and women. Emergent literary movements of this period-Bandaya and Dalit- did foreground the injustices of hegemonic socio-political positions and attitudes. This meant that the marginalized, suppressed
voices were not merely posing resistance to hegemonic literature, but were writing their literatures with visibility, with an ideology that supported their vision and literature. With this shift in purpose of literature, one does trace the difference between the earlier literary movements (especially, Sharana Movement, as it was also socio-political and literary in character) and the Navya literature.

But, the loss of momentum of Bandaya and Dalit in the early nineties turned attention of writers to craftsmanship in telling the stories: “. . . it sharpened the importance of the craft of writing. During the Navya period this was much discussed and the expertise shown by major writers of this time, in terms of form and structure, influenced by later writers, especially in the short story genre.” (Shanbhag 2010: 3) From a simple telling of a story in the written form, the focus shifted to narrating the story. This direct influence of European literatures that focus on narrative technique helps the writer to portray the socio-political issues that demanded a narrative technique rather than a simple story and yet the writer was deeply conscious of her/his relationship with the land s/he lived. The writer did assert her/his point of view through choosing a narrative technique. In fact, U R Ananthamurthy accepts that though he writes in Kannada, the objectivity is gained through European influences of narration. Shanbhag notes: “The leading writers of the Navya movement emphasized the importance of authenticity of experience and craftsmanship. Barring a few, most writers in this period were students of literature, actively engaged in the social and political situations of their times.” (Shanbhag 2010: 2)
Thus, the writings in Navya (modern) period depict an age in transition and its complex ways of responding to the situations. Tracing the major preoccupations and anxieties of the age, Shanbhag says: “In all, the literary world was brimming with experimentation, talent and enthusiasm. The Indian political scene in the post-independence period, failed ideologies and disappointments, search for an authentic experience in the new context, influence of Western literature—these were the leading debates of the period.” (Shanbhag 2010:2) The concern in the literary narratives shifts from telling a story to representing socio-political realities.

Alongside, vernacular writers were also using folk traditions in their writings to express the anxieties of the modern temperament. One finds that use of folk traditions in the written form varies. Writers use folk elements in their work differently viz. Girish Karnad, in keeping with the spirit of modern movement, folk traditions are a lens through which indigenous life is probed and depicted. For Kambar folk traditions mirror the indigenous people’s realisms. It is not a means to probe or to depict; it is a way of life that demands understanding. Thus the Navya period is inclusive of antithetical (contra) voices and literary trends.

Navya period is known for its emphasis on craftsmanship in narrating a story. Shanbhag notes: “During the Navya period this was much discussed and the expertise shown by the major writers of this time, in terms of form and structure, influenced later writers, especially in the short story genre.” (Shanbhag 2010: 3) But apart from the, this period also saw an engagement with socio-economic-political forces of their time and so, the function of literature changed from both self
expression and entertainment to a tool of social changes. (Shanbhag 2010:4); also, “Looking at the situation holistically, issues that tormented the nation tormented Karnataka as well. A free market and bourgeoning cities; a media that tailored itself to the needs of the market; a middle-class which laid enormous premium on material success; and the no-holds-barred corruption that ruptured the moral fabric of the society—these are issues that have left the entire nation in quandary. . . .” (Shanbhag 2010: 5)

That means, the selected narrative texts do not merely represent Navya literary traditions; in fact, thus anthologized, it accommodates a representation of realisms of the region. The title of the anthology (Sirigannada, Contemporary Kannada Writings) and choice of the texts vouch for such an understanding. This rationale for choosing the ‘writings’ quite explains the politics of anthology with respect to presenting region-specific concerns to non-Kannada readers. Not surprisingly, thus, there is no reference to translations—of untranslatability, of method of translations, visibility of translator etc. Writers from different parts of Karnataka present varied imagination and stories but together it presents realisms of the period. Thus, the literary narratives are probed for their distinct imagination, Folk realisms and subjectivities from an indigenous perspective. And in anthologizing these varied voices, Shanbhag brings together a distinct, predominant indigenous perspective to the contemporary literary scenario.

Shanbhag also observes the absence of an umbrella philosophy or literary movement under which the literary writing of the twentieth century could be brought under. One needs to probe the further the implication of this observation
with reference to contemporary vernacular literatures. What does Postcolonialism mean in such a scenario to vernacular writings; and in the absence of obvious Postcolonial literatures in vernacular literatures, how do indigenous literatures contribute to the discussion of exotic India and in this context, what is the role of translation in articulating realisms of (and not phantasmagoric realisms that cater to the exoticizing process of Postcolonial exotic) to global readers? Also, when vernacular literatures are translated into a global language like English, do they continue to contribute to the exoticization of culture in post-colonial scenario? For example, Girish Karnad’s *Fire and Rain*, translated to English by Karnad himself has drawn wide accolades; but in the Kannada literary scenario, an important criticism leveled against the play is that it is written for the sake of the western audience. And so, is superficial in content and technique. In contrast, Kambar’s *Shikhara Surya*, a novel written in Kannada has drawn “Kambar’s sensibility rooted as it is in folk traditions, perceives globalization in an exceptional way. The novel tells a story set in the past, but through it he builds a contemporary metaphor that mirrors human greed, desire for power and feudal instincts. Complex subjects such as nature and human relationships find effortless, spontaneous expression in his works.” (Shanbhag 2010: 276)

Thus, the choice of stories in this anthology begins a dialogue with the contemporary, globalised scenario by placing the narratives directly with the readers. The introduction does not try to find a rationale with literary theory for the selection of writings; instead, by focusing on the period and its concerns, stories regain their place, it draws attention to regional specificities. The anthology
succeeds in re-focusing the attention of the reader directly with socio-political and literary-psychological realisms of the time. In re-focusing, it also is futuristic in its vision but not blind to the past that shapes the contemporary as well as the future. In fact, this vision of time is rooted in philosophy as well as folklore.

At the same time, the related issues of globalization do bother him. He notes in the introduction: “To achieve better clarity, one needs to examine the social and political context of the period. There were no significant movements—social or literary—in the last two decades. However, many other issues that failed to gain momentum as a movement came to the fore. For example, the changes brought about by globalization, ecological consciousness, questions concerning the survival of kannada language, new faces of communalism, rampant corruption—these issues loomed largely ominously before us.” (Shanbhag 2010:4)

Another interesting aspect is a visible presence of folk elements in the literary narratives chosen in this anthology. It is reflected in the choice of titles—Kaamaroopi (U R Ananthamurthy), Fire and Rain, Shikharasoorya; the stories that have elements of folk them—Indentured spirit (K P Tejaswi), Story within a story (Akshara K V), Going By Tables and Chairs (Vaidehi), Classmate (P Lankesh). The presence of folk elements in the written literary genres is an interesting aspect of survivance of folklores. This survivance is an ability to adapt to contemporary demands and an important feature of indigenous literatures.

Of course, it is hard to identify a single purpose for selecting folk motifs by the writer but that folklores survive in written form is in itself an interesting journey. Anna Liberata De Souza, complains to her young folklorist
Mary Frere that storytelling a vanishing art. She also comments on how written literatures have slowly erasing orality due to rapid move towards absolute literacy. Anna’s anxiety is not only of disappearance of storytelling; it is also about how the printed form decides whether the said story is ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect’. Anna’s comment on lack of time to tell or listen to stories is a significant observation on modernization of India thrust by the colonizer that has changed the familial relationships, perhaps for worse. Narayan says:

Articulating a lament that is widespread among past and present storytellers, Anna complained that story telling traditions were on the wane in her time. She blamed growing literacy, the rise of a cash economy and escalating prices. Children who previously might be entertained with stories at home were instead going to school, and old people who might have had the time to tell them lacked leisure as they were continuing to earn money. (Narayan2005: xvi)

Interestingly, similar anxiety haunts Shanbhag as well, but in the changed socio-political context of the twentieth century:

Looking at the situation holistically, issues that tormented the nation tormented Karnataka as well. A free market and the burgeoning cities; a media that tailored itself to the needs of the market; a middle class which laid enormous premium on material success; and the no-holds-barred corruption that ruptured the moral fabric of the society—these are the issues that have left the entire nation in quandary. . . . This in turn
has taken a toll on language, for art forms like Yakshagana
work like hidden springs; the spontaneity with which they
use language to discuss a gamut of issues is crucial to keep a
language in good health. On the other hand, in a city space,
with diminished use of the local language—in daily life as
well as the education system—it seems like there is no
vocabulary to capture the experiences of the nouveau world.
(Shanbhag 20105-6)

Thus, a description of the three primary texts *Old Deccan Days or
Hindoo Fairy Legends current in Southern India, In Quest of Indian Folktales Ram
Gharib Chaube William Crooke and Sirigannada, Contemporary Kannada
Writings*, situates the texts in their milieu. The Postcolonial literary theories have
attempted to understand the socio-political implications of colonization. But this
understanding is incomplete without the stories of people that depict directly their
experiences and perceptions. Literature depicts realisms—social, political,
psychological and/or spiritual, metaphysical. And understanding the primary texts
with this background perception are important to engage seriously in a conversation
with stories/narratives. In this attempt, the reader gets a glimpse of layers of
realisms that the three primary texts represent. Realism—as a philosophy is
complex as it is inclusive of varied realisms. The three primary texts contextualized
in the broad framework of Folkloristics and contemporary literary theories presents
realisms of the common man in everyday life. And a study of Folk realisms
depicted through these stories is a significant document of the history of people and their journey into the twenty-first century.

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CHAPTER II: TOWARDS FOLK REALISMS

‘What is realism?’ is a primordial question. Western academia has interrogated this question in as varied disciplines as philosophy, art, literature, ethnography, psychology, sociology and recently, in Qualitative Research Methods as well. Philosophers have questioned the very premise of Realism-existence of ‘Real’. Realism in art and literature meant representing ‘the thing as it is’.

Psychology considers the unconscious as realm of realism; the realisms considered in Sociology and Ethnography is equally divergent as the former discusses the