

**In Conversation with the Village Diety: A study in a Sabara Tribal Community of Odisha**

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**Abstract:** Tribes, throughout the world have a unique religious life in the broad diversity of traditions. Festivals form an integral aspect of the socio-cultural life of tribal people. These people are highly religious by the fact that their world is full of mysteries and mostly governed by deities and spirits. Their religious beliefs and practices aim at ensuring personal security and happiness as well as community well being. The present paper tries to explain my personal experience during my stay in a rehabilitated tribal village -- Krushnanagar, during a festival season. The village is inhabited by Sabara tribal people, who have been displaced from the original village Dampada in Khurda district of Odisha. My field experience got more interesting when I witnessed the possession of some supernatural power to a man who begets the power to communicate with the local people. The period during which the goddess enters onto the body of the man is called "Kalisi". During Kalisi, people accept the said person as a god man who could also be a medicine man of the locality. He is also accepted as the fortune teller of the community.

Now, the questions are –

1. Does Kalisi acts as a defence mechanism in the community?
2. Is it essential for a healthy community life??
3. Does Kalisi have a role to play in the process of social development???

My paper is an effort to answer to all these questions...