

Essay on Culture of Folk

Folk culture may be divided into four main categories: (1) material, (2) formalized, (3) functional, and (4) performing. Included in the material category are those things that are used by people in their day-to-day life. These include houses, buildings, furniture, utensils, transport, professional implements, cottage-craft, fancy goods, costumes, foodstuffs, medicines, etc. Farmers produce various crops, weavers produce cloth, potters produce utensils, carpenters produce furniture and blacksmiths produce iron implements.

Professional people like washermen, hairdressers, goldsmiths, bell-metal craftsmen, conch-shell craftsmen, sweet makers, cobblers, thatchers, and fishermen use a wide variety of implements. Village people produce their essential goods mainly by themselves and market them directly.

There was a time when the weavers of Bengal earned worldwide fame with their exquisite muslin. The fame of jamdani fabric still survives. The clay statues of Hindu gods and goddesses made by the potters are superb examples of their craftsmanship. They also make fancy pots for worshipping various deities. Since ancient times carpenters have been making wooden beds, doors, door frames, boats, etc. At one time they used to make ocean-going ships with fancy names such as mayurpankhi, saptadinga, chauddadinga, etc. Bamboo, cane, timber, jute, and sponge wood are grown in Bengal are used to make a variety of essential and fancy goods and curiosities. While many of these items are produced by craftsmen for sale, many items are made by housewives during their leisure hours or as part of their household routine. Shika or hanging string bags, used to keep food safe from insects and animals are both aesthetic and functional. Apart from cooking routinely she does many other things.

Bangladesh has a rich folk culture that includes folk tales, folk songs, folk ballads, folk plays, rhymes, riddles, mantras, anecdotes, etc. Oral literature as well as folk art is regarded as part of the formalized stream of folk culture. Farmers, cowherds, boatmen, fakirs, ascetics, and professional snake charmers sing folk songs. There are nearly 50 different types of folksongs in Bangladesh: jari, sari, gambhira, kirtan, ghatu, jhumur, bolan, , leto, gajan, barongasi, dhamali, patua, sapude, khemta, bhatiyali, bhawaiya, murshidi, marfat and baul.

Folk art includes a variety of different decorative arts: Alpana, pottery painting, wall painting, body painting, etc. Alpana, drawn by a housewife as part of her devotional duties, fulfills a religious purpose as well as satisfies an aesthetic need. Evolving from what was a devotional art, Alpana has become a decorative art and is done on floors, pillars, walls, winnowing platters, and baskets, on the occasion of both Hindu and Muslim weddings as well as at cultural functions and at public places on national days. Canvas painting by patuas occupied the forms of religious tales.