Ethno-Archeological Study on Kumbhara Community, a Pottery Making Artisan, their Livelihood and Social Organization in the Middle Mahanadi Valley in Odisha Highland

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ABSTRACT: From 19th century onward used the ethnographic method in variable archaeological literature to inquiry on primitive culture basically aid in archaeological interpretation. This type of inquiry is purposed to establish co-relation between present primitive cultures with past material remains. Recently the middle Mahanadi valley has excavated on various archaeological sites of prehistoric ceramics culture. In ethnographic survey, this region is found the habitation of ethnic ancient tribes and rich material culture. Mostly present study is examined ethnographic information of ceramic culture to archaeological point of view. This is an attempt to study of regional ethnic culture of pottery production system attach to livelihood of Kumbhara community of middle Mahanadi valley, Odisha highland. The prehistoric ceramics has provided techno-cultural value for establishing co-relation with material culture, artisan and livelihood of the ethnic communities and their primitive traditional cultural activities

Keywords co-relation, ethnic culture etc, primitive, techno-cultural, tradition.

I. Introduction:

The contemporary ethnic society and their socio-cultures behaviour originated right from the social formation. The traits of material culture and tradition always transformed generation to generation and reformed in culture. The tradition of material culture manifested certain characteristic of socio-economic behaviour which related to cognitive activities of prehistoric people. The ceramic culture evolved right from Neolithic phase to early history has changed from time to time going toward greater complexity in modern age. But in the typo-technological case of ceramic archaeology in middle Mahanadi valley we found certain cognitive ideas of artisans’ involvement in the techno-style and decorative pattern. The rural primitive village culture is a sign of simple socio-cultural behavior to highlight basic component of ethnoarchaeological interpretation. The certain activity and tradition of primitive human society are intangible part of culture which derived in past and continued till now. The traditional activities of ethnic cultural setting of primitive peoples are more valuable that can find out relevant information by ethnographic study. We know that the traditional
archaeologists reconstruct ceramics archaeology which is based on typological classification and chronological assessment varied morphological shape, size and colors of pottery but recent ethnoarchaeological theory reconstruct scientific manner that assumed complete picturesque ancient people and culture.

The middle Mahanadi valley is place of very ancient civilization have explored and excavated by various agencies in last part of 20th and in the beginning of 21th century. The archaeological sites of middle Mahanadi valley are Hikudi [1], Khameswaripali [2], Bhejidihi [3], Kumursingha [4], Badmal [5], Manamunda [6]; Narla Asurgarh etc have excavated, explored and yielded large quantities of pottery in variable stratigraphic levels. All reporting sites are provided large archaeological information of pottery in variable cultural periods from Neolithic to early historic period. In the study of scientific endeavor, the material culture of prehistoric potteries, like Neolithic-coded ware, Chalcolithic-white painted glossy slipped ware, iron age- glossy black and red ware are appreciated as archaeological evidences. No doubt these study reflected ceramic technology but there are not been ethno-archaeologically studied on pottery making artisan, their livelihood and social organization in middle Mahanadi valley region. The ethnic potters are how to produce, and distribute in regional scale is an important matter for analysis on indigenous production pattern. The material culture of archaeological potteries founded in variable sites is matter of regional produced artifacts or imported. Ethnography as tool of ethnoarchaeology for enquiring and explaining archaeological problem that the certain studies have direct analogical interpretation on archaeological data that can lead to distorted picture. But the reconstruction of paradigm of cultural pattern assumed to better understanding and interpretation of past culture. According Gould and Watson, ethno archaeology is ‘A major premise of archaeological research is that what is known about the past, in term of both human behaviour and the operation of cultural system, is achieved by analogy with behaviour and system in the present’ [7],[8],[9][10],[11],[12],[13],[14],[15],[16],[17],[18].

Some ethnoarchaeological researches have been undertaken in different parts of India by archaeologists and anthropologists to describe and explain the construction and development of ceramic production among them the work of Behura [19], Gupta [20], Saraswati and Behura [21], Ghosh and Bhattacharya [22], Sinopoly [23], Kramer [24] are noteworthy. Renu Bala [25] has done valuable work with ceramic ethnoarchaeological approach in middle Ganga plains. She has illustrated correlation of ethnography and archaeology to explain earthenware. Ghosh and Bhattacharya have made an attempt to explain pottery of tribal in their ceramic research. Carol Kramer’s ceramic ethnoarchaeological studies in India are notable here. She published her work in some research articles and a book entitled “Pottery in Rajasthan: Ethnoarchaeology in Two Indian Cities”. Her work is significant to understand the ceramic production, distribution, interaction in pottery manufacturing communities and style characteristics of ceramics in Rajasthan. Sinopoly has done her ceramic
ethnoarchaeological research in a traditional rural extended family house hold workshop in Kamampuram, South India and contemporary Malwa in central India.

An understanding of ancient productive arrangements and socio-economic behaviour of ceramics culture is important because the relations of production are among the most fundamental points of integration between members of a society, between societies, and between societies and the environment. The pottery production and distribution system constitute a mechanism of socio-economic process of livelihood of potter community. The existing system of pottery production and distribution linked with sociological reciprocity and potter economy.

II. Objectives of the Study:

1) To identify the nature and types of reproductive health problems among the women.
2) To examine the socio-cultural factors influencing their reproductive health.
3) To find out the accessibility of health services for the respondents.

III. Methodology:

This ethno-archaeological field study using ethnographic techniques to collect relevant data on pottery produced community and livelihood in sampled production centers of variable village settlement. The recording of variable data is by mean of interview, personal observation and photographic documentation. The ethnographic data are evaluating in the model of precedent cultural interaction. The system of production can be defined according to involvement of artisan, their institution and workshop pattern. The approach of social involvement can be described based on arrangement of operational pattern, tools and technology. Our studies have focused on patternning of pottery produced artisan on potters concentrated village settlement. The pottery production system which linked socio-economic and cultural tradition is starts from unseen remote past. The techniques of the field survey imply ethnographic sampling strategy on potter settlement in middle Mahanadi valley. The intensive level of survey is selected sample villages where ethnic potter are sedentarily habitat and produced vessels. The sampling strategy of this survey is based on collection of ethnographic data on various canters of village settlements. The ethnic group of potter community is settled with other communities of village. The ethnic group may be defining a firm aggregate of people settled in the region. They are possessing common feature relatively staple peculiarities of language and culture that recognized their unity. Ethnographic survey is the integral part of ethno-archaeological studies for yielding relevant ethnographic data of contemporary socio-cultural pattern people to generate model for investigate of substantial cultural behaviour of prehistoric people. Ethno-archaeologist always reconstructs theory and prediction archaeological point of view for study prehistoric human being cultural behaviour.

The village culture provided general attributes of population, settlement pattern and
environment as a whole cultural system. The village also provided attributes of subsystem of culture like subsistence pattern, crafts, metallurgy, social system, trade and communication. The ecology of village culture applying into culture system theory, production system is the part of subsystem of village culture. The middle Mahanadi valley has been chosen for the present study for above reason as well as the existence a large concentration of potter’s community’ habitats in village settlements.

![Figure -1, map showing the study area](image)

**IV. Study Area:**

The choice of an area for ethnoarchaeological research is crucial. The covering area of the middle Mahanadi valley is situated on the westernmost regions covering the three districts, of Odisha in eastern India. Physiographical situation, the middle Mahanadi valley lies between the northern uplands and the south-western hilly regions of Orissa highlands and stretches from the Hirakud dam Reservoir to about the Tikarpada gorge. It comprises of Sambalpur, Bargarh, Subarnapur, Angul, and Boudh district of Orissa (Fig. 1). Geographically it is a transitional zone between the Chhattisgarh plains and the coastal plains of Orissa [27]. The area, characterized by tropical monsoon type climate with medium to high annual rainfall (average. 1500 mm)\(^2\), is a self-contained geographical entity, which probably had sufficient range of ecological variability providing the year-round requirements of the sedentary communities from Neolithic settlement to present day. Even today the area provides an extensive and varied resource base to the present population for its diet and other consumption requirements. Farming is the main occupation, of most of the people in village level and backbone of economy. Rice is the most important food crop and is grown in this region. There is a large concentration of potter community in the study area has facilitated to present investigation.

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pertaining to records variability in settlement, living in different eco-zones, viz foothill and plain of geographical area.

The total Mahanadi valley is divided into three geo-ecological clustered zones as Subarnapur, Boudh, and Angul that have slightly differentiation area. The Subarnapur district covered with plain area, but the Boudh and Angul are plateau and undulating area. This ethnographic study on pottery producing Kumbhara community in village centers is provided database. The Kumbhara community is most ethnic community Jhadua by caste that means forest dweller in this region that they are relatively small and simple. This simple community is engaged in elementary pottery producing work is now stage of rapidly disappearing due to modern industries. The present investigation has undertaken pertaining to record the variability on pottery production artisan. We have located as many as ten potter’s settlement. The Sample of Pottery production centers are basically rural village habitation of variable ecological setting. The Demographic patterns in village settlement are formed with homogeneous as well heterogeneous caste live in together create village culture. Almost all villages’ settlements are based on traditional social structures. The middle Mahanadi valley is extensive area which covers two districts like Subarnapur, Boudh, and part of Rairakhol of Sambalpur and Athamallik of Angul. It is extensively hilly and mountain range and forest areas where Mahanadi flows northwest-northeast direction from Sambalpur to Subarnapur and west-east direction from Subarnapur to Satakosia. The area of plains in the middle Mahanadi valley, better termed as the Subarnapur plains. Apart from the main plains, large subsequent and consequent tributaries of the middle Mahanadi valley like the Tel, the Suk-Tel, the Jira and the Jhaun have eroded deep elongated valley on the right bank of the Mahanadi. They have made the terrain very irregular. The plain is fertile and is predominantly a rice growing region.

Both of the banks of central Mahanadi valley having wide slop areas with cultivable land and largely concentration of potter’s settlements have dispersed around the plain and foothill area of eco-zone provided facility to investigation pertaining to record variability in ceramic production system. Secondly the central Mahanadi valley is the potent zone of archaeology having dense concentration of prehistoric settlement with evolution of socio-religious cultural movement in this area.

It is occupied both bank of river Mahanadi from Binka to Satakosia gorge nearly 12240 sq km area. It is covering Bargarh upland in the west to Eastern Ghats rang in the east, and in the north side the Bamanda mountain range and in the south side Kandhamal mountain range. The local dialectical language of this region is Oriya. The geomorphologic setting of middle Mahanadi valley is divided into three regional clusters area like Subarnapur, Boudh and Athamallik of Angul. The district Subarnapur is situated in the eastern part of the middle Mahanadi valley which is flat and undulating area. The eastern side of Subarnapur situated near Bolangir district covering Gandhamardan range has derived tributaries like Suktel, Ong and Jira which flow in Subarnapur district. Subarnapur contains the confluence of many
tributaries of Mahanadi like Tel, Suktel, Ong and Jira. So it may be described as the “basin of Mahanadi”. The pottery of middle Mahanadi valley is more ancient that the evidence has been found in Hikudi the early Neolithic settlement. Other cultural phases of Chalcolithic to early history pottery are found in Khameswaripali, Nuagar, Kumursingha etc. pottery making is a traditional art and culture.

V. Result and Discussion:

ARTISAN

The identity of the artisans is of central importance in studies that focus on power, economic organization, and on the role of material culture in social relations. Artisans play a central role in materializing ideology and social meaning through the creation and transformation of material objects. The artisans engaged in the manufacture of various earthenware and terracotta toys are known as Kumbhara. The Kumbhara constitute the potter caste throughout India. Etymologically the word Kumbhakara is derived from Sanskrit kumbha; it means those who give shape of kumbha (pot). The potter family is basic unit formed with the man, wife, children, and parent. The social system structure refer to social behaviour of potter family generate from patrilineal kinship system. The potter family is formed a standardized social organization. The producer class of artisan involves in this work in systematic way of arrangement in village society. The artisans are backbone of pottery production system served to the other class of people. This system has continuation from origin through evolution where pottery is only medium of intake as well as decoration. Now this craft is in the stage of decline with modern industries. The traditional system of pottery production is alive now in the middle Mahanadi valley.

In social organization of Hindu caste system, family is the basic unit occupationally specific specialized endogamous group. The caste likes potters, weavers, smiths, etc are established in an ecological sedentary village settlement. Like other Hindu, potters are members of an endogamous caste (jati). In Orissa they were referred to by other as Kumbhara. The pottery is made, distributed, and used in the context of India’s caste system. Castes are considered to be organized hierarchically in relation to one another. In Orissa, Kumbhars are habited two types as odia Kumbhar in coastal Orissa and Jhadua Kumbhar in western Orissa. In the middle Mahanadi valley are seen Jhadua Kumbhars on various Vansa like Teli, Magadha, Sikili, hatua etc. The specialized occupation is division of caste system. The caste based occupation is a prime social system formed according to occupationally specialized endogamous groups whose members follow complex prescription and proscription about relationship with one another and with other caste, and in much of India caste are considered to be organized hierarchically in relation to one another.
SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The family is the primary social institution of potters’ society which meets their primary and secondary needs by production of craft materials. The occupational purpose of potter community is to satisfy specific needs for instance, needs for food, clothing, and shelter are met by economic activities made up of the organized work force. The functional labors of potters have exploited materials and energy from the natural environment and to manufacture pottery, facilities, equipment, processed food, and fuels. The economic institution also distributes these goods and services to consumers. The pottery making skill and knowledge concerning how to carry out the production system is a teaching and learning process. The head man of the family drive the functions activities and thereby fulfill the basic needs. The nature of the potter economy has to do with production, distribution of goods and services to consumer. The potters’ economy is signified on variable finished items i.e. utilitarian, storage, transport and decorative purpose. The finished products are distributional aspects of the economy that interpreted by this institution. The potters are distributed vessels by mean transport on roads and by waterways. The economic produce is reflected by subsistence activity of potter community.

The potters of Orissa are Odia speaking people divided into two groups Odia and Jhadua. There are certain distinctions among them that Odia Kumbhara are high in their cultural attitude and Jhadua are lower. They live in endogamous extended family homesteads dispersed over the landscape, each married man within a homestead occupying a separate house. The distribution of potter settlement in variable landscape of Orissa is found in census report 1961. This census is surveyed on small scale industries of Orissa in rural and urban base. The spatial distribution of potter communities in Orissa shows the figurative statement on settlement pattern. At that time 24857 potter household workshops are established in Orissa and 66839 potters are working (Fig.2)
Figure-2, line chart showing potter of different district of Odisha in census, 1961

The *Kumbhars* living in the middle Mahanadi valley could not say since when their ancestors first settled in the area. All the households reported that they could trace back the residence of their ancestors in the same area up to 5 generation. They were certain that even before that, their ancestors were living in the same area, but they have no idea about their origin or when they first settled here.

Table 1: Distribution of potters’ workshop in the middle Mahanadi valley, as per census report, 1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>Total workshops</th>
<th>1 Person</th>
<th>2-5 persons</th>
<th>6-9 persons</th>
<th>10-19 Persons</th>
<th>20-29 Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolangir</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>1519</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boudh-Kandhamal</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>549</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denkanal</td>
<td>1728</td>
<td>634</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambalpur</td>
<td>2614</td>
<td>414</td>
<td>2118</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above cited table (Table 1) shows the density of potters’ community, sedentarily settled in the middle Mahanadi zone of Orissa. The potters in this settlement belong to same communities and cultural tradition. The characterization of the rural population of potter communities scattered over the middle river valley dominated a homogeneous culture. The ethnographic studies of social organization of traditional potter’s community of the middle Mahanadi valley of Orissa is provided archaeological clue with rich living material culture along the occupational continuity. The above table shows the potter workshop in various locality of Orissa. The variable type of establishment of potter communities and their engagement in workshop have been showed in this table. The present survey on sample potter villages in the middle Mahanadi valley have taken out data of their settlement in various landscapes. The villages of potter settlement are Mursundhi, Hingma, Lakarma, Sahupara, Badkhaligaon, Mahalikpara, Dianghat, Tebhapadar Aenlachat, and Dianghat. The distribution of potter of different village is given below (fig-3).
The *Kumbhara* community is densely concentrated and variable types of potteries are produced in the landscape of the middle Mahanadi valley. Above mentioned 10 sampled potters’ village settlement are located on different ecological zone around the proto-historic and early settlement sites in the valley. The middle Mahanadi valley is constituted a multi-cultural zone have spreading over a vast area in five districts like Subarnapur, Bargarh, Boudh, part of Angul and Sambalpur.

**RELIGIOUS BELIEFS ON CRAFT**

The potter of the middle Mahanadi valley believed that after creation of natural world with all creatures, by Brahma the creator of universe asked for food to almighty. Nirakara swami provided food with houseful. *Dhana* (paddy) has been given to human being. There are arising problem of husking the *Dhana* to get the *Tandula* (rice). The green *Tandula* is not support to digest of human being. The human being is not healthy by eating green *Tandula* so that to *Pakaanna* (boil food) is necessary to survive. Brahma sent to Narada to tell about the problem in the earth due to unavailability of pots for cooking. Narada has gone to Baikuntha Bhubana and described problem in detail near Nirakara swami. After listening about problem of the human being that they were not satisfied due to non availability of pots on the earth. There arose anger in the mind that Sweda Bindu flew from body of Nirakara swami. From
Sweda Bindu of Nirakara swami a man was born named Rudrapala the first person of potter. Nirakara swami had given the duties to Rudrapala for production of pots in the earth.

**CULTURAL TRADITION**

The potter community of the middle Mahanadi valley has followed certain cultural tradition. They worship of their departmental deity in Kurala panchami in the month of Margasira. The potter caste, like other artisan castes of India, has a departmental deity. According to *Kumbhara* traditional religious beliefs, they worshiped their departmental deity, like Rudrapala (*Kumbhara* Budha), Ratneswrari (*Kumbhara* Budhi) and other Apsara (heaven ladies) with wheel in Kurala panchami. They oblation vegetarian food, fruits flower, sacred lamp, vermillion sandal paste and leaves, they don’t offer any animal sacrifices to any deity whatsoever. The potter family observed festival for seven day and worship their deities. In this observation of festival Kural panchami all potter family are gather in one centre of their community. Seven day worship to their departmental deity owns in following way. In the first day they start their worship as established *Mangal Kalasha*. The priest worships the departmental deity till day of panchami.

**LIFE CYCLE AND SOCIAL TRADITIONS**

The life cycle of the potter of this region has linked with pottery making work. The potters are basically depended on the pottery production. From the early young age potters learn their crafts from their father or relative. Technically male potter has proficiency in their work. Potting work is hardship related to their basic skill of throwing, beating and firing. Part of the work, male potters is divided their work on the basis of forming sequence. The three major work of the potter are clays preparation, throwing and beating. The range of the work is divided on the nature of day. The early morning the potter does preparation of clay then goes to breakfast. Then start throwing work when the sun light comes to the yards. The throwing job is technical as well as hardship. The throwing continuously goes according to target work of a day is completed. Then they go to rest. In the afternoon the potters do beating. Basically when the pots are dried on the leather hard stage, the potters beat the pots and bring complete shape. The production as well as distribution of pots is major responsibility of the potter. The *Kumbhara* are following the patrilineal kinship of endogamous social group. They form their own social customs with their clan. The *Kumbhara* clan is formed with various *Vansa* like Sikili, Magadha, Teli, kalapithia etc. The marriage is occurred among their own caste.

**SOCIAL STATUS**

The potter sociological background is attached with Hindu caste system. The caste division of Hindu is divided into 36 Pataks or subgroup, potter caste is one of them. The social status of potter is by Sudra category. The *Kumbhara* were Sudra as the forth class among the social hierarchies. Most of the people inhabited in these villages are weavers potters, washer
men, oilmen, smith, etc. who took to industrial vocations from this class. The potters are artisan class doing their hereditary occupation. They led the life of socially organized among them. Their social organization as Kumbhara Samaj bounded in laws. According to literary evidence we found the complex social structure in later Vedic period. The four order of social system of Hindu, the Brahmin are priest class control the religious affair, next the Kshetriya are fighter class dominated political affair, Vaisya deal the business and Sudra do vocation and service to other. The vocations brought the formation of social order in a complex society. The potters are Sudra whose craft is low political influence.

**SUBSISTENCE ECONOMY**

Small-scale household industry of pottery production, agriculture, cattle-herding, and fishing are forming the subsistence base of potter community. Potting is occupational profession and main work of male artisan. But only a relatively small number of men are pursued agriculture and non-agriculture job. In the sense that the body of users is significantly larger than the body of producers, the middle Mahanadi valley pottery is a specialized craft.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of occupation</th>
<th>Nature of activity</th>
<th>frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pottery production</td>
<td>Working in their workshop, produced pottery and marketed in weekly market</td>
<td>65 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivation</td>
<td>Own cultivation land</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labour in agriculture and non agricultural sector</td>
<td>• Working as wages agriculture labour in agricultural activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thatching roofs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Erecting mud wall and other sphere of building construction</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Working in monthly contact in agricultural field</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Female are working as the maid servant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Performing as folk dance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DIETARY PATTERN

The Kumbhars are procured of their food by exchange vessels from cultivators. The potter women are also procured fruits, leave and root from near the jungle. The potters are also catch fish in pond and river in leisure time. Most of the potter house have attached garden for produces vegetable and leave in rainy season. Most of them domesticate chicken, sheep and goat for meat. Most of the household of artisan frequently consumed rice, dal, sag with different types of Peetha (rice cake) and vegetables. They consumed indigenous food during their different festivals. The traditional food habits especially vegetables, fruits and different local rice cake (peetha) provides important information about nutritional effects on artisan community. Fortunately, existing food resources such as local food are still consumed frequently and remain important in the western Orissa diet.

SPECIALIZATION

The potters are decidedly full-time specialists that large parts of the earnings come from their production. The potters of the middle Mahanadi valley are skilled workmanship that they must meet the small scale industrial production as well as agricultural and domestic responsibilities. Most of the potters’ family comprised of 2 to 10 members. Potting work is done in main subsistence activity. In order to obtain Potting activities provided a major cash for such things as household necessities (e.g. rice, dal and vegetable), for livelihood. There are specialized workshop facilities. Potting is carried out in the homestead as part of the daily routine of domestic activities. Pottery is produced all year, but considerably less of it is made during periods of peak agricultural activity (planting, weeding, and harvesting) and during the rainy seasons.

Table 3: Family size/composition of the potter’s of middle Mahanadi valley

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Family size</th>
<th>Number of household</th>
<th>% percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>24.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>29.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>35.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This form of ceramic production, in 'household industry', is capable of an astonishing volume of production. Although potting is recognized to be hard work, it is also a social labour that involves men artisan in an important network of shared activity, knowledge, and personal relationships. Potting is only one of many interactive networks in which a potter participates. Moreover, the identity as a potter is only one of many roles performed by these men artisan, and certainly not the most significant in terms of defining their overall status.

**DISCUSSION**

The ethnographical study on ethnic *Kumbhara* community in the middle Mahanadi valley provided variable data of cultural creativity and social organization. The Ethnoarchaeological analysis, the social organization of ceramic production culture in the middle Mahanadi valley is cleared that the Kumbhara community followed specialized art from remote past. The ethnographic field work on sample villages of pottery production centers of the middle Mahanadi valley areas to investigate socio-cultural behaviour of traditional system of pottery production, their settlement pattern, subsistence activities, social organization, specialized work, standard of work, scale of production, mode of production are valuable phenomena of cultural system of recording for archaeological interpretation. The subsistence pattern is revolved around rice cultivation and domestication of sheep, goat, cattle and buffalo. Hunting is formerly important components in the subsistence regime in forest clad but has decreased in importance with deforestation. Some forest products are still utilized for basketry and other crafts and widens cultivation produces a variety of crops, including sugar cane, sweet potato, corn, and mug. Most of these crops are grown and consumed by the household. Rice is becoming an important cash crop. Earthenware vessels, as well as other utilitarian goods, are traditionally distributed within a predominantly barter economy by means of balanced reciprocity. Pots of the middle Mahanadi valley are often used as currency for 'balanced exchange' transactions in which food, livestock, raw materials, manufactured items, and field labour are bartered for earthenware vessels. The tradition of pottery manufacture has been the focus of ethnoarchaeological investigation the middle Mahanadi valley potters, almost exclusively men, employ a combination of wheel and paddle-and-anvil techniques to produce a range of ceramic vessels for cooking and water storage that are used on a daily basis. In the last decade, potters community of the middle Mahanadi valley has also developed a repertoire of non-traditional, decorative forms that are widely exchanged. This Research explored the issue of specialization at the community level. All members of *Kumbhara* community have
concentrated on the pottery-making. The scale of pottery production has steadily diminished since three decades while the modern metal industry in nearby has grown. The potting activity is well-known for its ceramic specialization from unseen past. The villages of the middle Mahanadi valley have great importance in ceramic production and community specialization. The investigation parametric procedures and statistical methods are useful to investigate contemporary village settlement. The economy of the middle Mahanadi valley continues to rely on a well-prevailed barter system call jajmani. The remote village transactions between potters with other communities are exchanged pottery with paddy. Barter Exchange is fundamental to the economic system of the middle Mahanadi valley and has cultural outcome at every level of each encounter for detailed study of this system. The ceramic in stratigraphic levels provided chronological sequence of pottery production and use of prehistoric human being. This art physically is changed in time to time. The present art form is different than past because the mentality of the society has also changed. The surveyed productions have explored to understand pottery production behaviour which followed tradition of pottery network in middle Mahanadi valley. The contemporary remote rural village culture is always counted as the first stage settlement. This culture behavioral pattern is reliable for prehistoric human being.

**VI. Conclusion:**

The ethnoarchaeological theory is based on evaluation of human sociological perceptive in archaeological investigation. From Neolithic stage, prehistoric human being learns domestication of plant and animal with pottery production. Potters are earliest artisan who produced vessel as “nutrition of food channel or medium of food processor”. The potters are artisan community linked with age old tradition of pottery production. This community has large concentration and sedentarily habitation in the middle Mahanadi valley region from unknown past. The community is ethnic origin and evolved with long standing occupational specialization. The long established traditional practice of village culture is an influential source that reflects indigenous culture and socio-economic background. The potting practice is inherited legitimacy of potter community. The pottery production in village culture is very old tradition of nonindustrial people continuing process of cultural belief and practice which is still
alive in the middle Mahanadi valley. This simple socio economic creativity of pottery making craft is now stage of decline. The role of potter community in ancient time was more valuable one. The rich cultural background of the middle Mahanadi valley region is related to archaeological evidences of pottery production system in the past. The community is originated with the occupational specialization during caste formation from early age. The literary evidences of caste formation are based on occupational specialization in Vedic culture. The occurrences of occupational distinction among the Indian society are prime concept of social complexity. However the regional variability of habitation of potter community in eco-environment is subjected for livelihood. The production of variable artifacts, like making of pottery production in traditional techniques which alive in central Mahanadi in Orissa, so it is profitable to pursue ethno-archaeological studies not only in technological aspects but also from the socio-cultural and commercial point of view. This research could cite the long term study on ceramics production system on remote villages in Mahanadi valley for tracing back of archaeological evidences.

References:


nd session, pp. 998-1002 and personal discussion with Dr. P.K. Behera, excavator of the sites of Hikudi.


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