

## **FOLKLORE RESEARCH ON OMENS IN KUNCHUTTU KORALA**

*RDAIT. Amarasingha<sup>1</sup>*

The researcher's interest in folklore, the fact that Kunchuttu Korala is the Korala where the researcher's native village is located, and that a folklore study has not been done on omens of Kunchuttu Korala so far prompted the present researcher to this study. The concept of omens which has not moved away from Kunchuttu Korale people gained an important place in the past and it can be said that it is getting the same prominence at present. Books and interviews were used as research methods. It was revealed through oral tradition that the origin of the omens of this Korala is the origin of these people centred on agriculture. It was also revealed that omens are not new creations, but a folk tradition. Three types of omens can be observed. They are good omens, bad omens, and obstacle omens. Under good omens, Kunchuttu people consider meeting a pregnant mother, milking cow, milkman, and young children as auspicious. These symbolize prosperity. Meeting an empty pot, crowing of crows, shaking of ears by a dog, seeing axes, catties, or bundles of firewood when starting a journey have been considered as inauspicious omens. Whereas some consider meeting a thera auspicious, others consider it inauspicious. Specially, most people revealed that from the past, Kunchuttu people heed to these omens at the beginning of their journeys for their main occupations such as hunting, honey gathering, and cattle rearing because their destination is along a battle path through the thicket. Additionally, Kunchuttu people use a neutral type of omens called obstacle omens. Forgetting the things to be carried when going to the village of Mahakele such as rice, coconut, betel nut, and arecanut is a good omen because it results in loss of interest in the journey. Meeting an old person or a ragged person causes inaction. Meeting infertile women, midwives or Rada people was known to be inauspicious, and a special fact revealed was that first chance should be given to these groups in occupational activities like fishing. In comparison to other areas, it was also learned that the omens that affect the journey through the jungle are special in Kunchuttu Korala and it can be concluded that even today they strongly believe in omens. Thus, omens are interpreted based on information in folklore as a concept rooted in Kunchuttu Korale people, who are the heirs of a large number of Buddhists.

**Keywords:** Omens, Asuba Symbolism, Auspicious Omens, Crow prophecy, Obstacle Omens

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<sup>1</sup> [isharatharanganinewpvt@gmail.com](mailto:isharatharanganinewpvt@gmail.com)