

Thara Phoopha Abhi Zinda Hai: The Residual Asserts Back Through The Folk

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Abstract

‘Thara phoopha¹ abhi zinda hai’ was a slogan of a protest march in the city of Rohtak in the state of Haryana in India in the month of September, 2022; it literally translates into ‘I, the husband of your father’s sister, am still alive’. With this ‘phoopha’ cue in the middle of the things, this research paper studies the folk quotient of the slogans and the songs that have been the war cry and the spiritual tonic for some of the most popular protest marches around the world, over the ages. For that purpose, the protest songs/slogans of some of the very popular protests of students, peasants, workers, etc have been looked into. The concept of the Residual has been gleaned from the readings of Raymond Williams; while for the conception of the Collective Unconscious, Carl Gustav Jung has been relied upon. The paper studies that the Residual asserts itself through the folk in the protest songs and slogans, collectively and unconsciously.

Keywords: The Residual, the folk songs, the protest songs, the protest slogans, the folk spirit-bearer, the collective unconscious.

Introduction

In the month of September, citizens of Rohtak (a city in the state of Haryana that lies in the north of India, less than sixty miles from the national capital) witnessed and participated in a bizarre protest march. The protest march was to ‘prove’

that a hundred year old man who was declared dead for want of valid documents by the district pension authorities was indeed alive. The protesters took out a mock marriage procession with the old man, already married and great-grandfather, as the groom to the district headquarters through the streets of the city dancing along, with the placards reading 'thara phoophā abhi zinda hai'(your uncle is still alive; in Hindi, English word uncle translates into a multitudes of relations;phoophā is one of them). The protest march, from the mock-marriage procession to the placards, had obvious folk imprints. Not to mention, the protest march was immensely successful, politically and literally; politically, the old man's pension was restored and the other pending pension cases were attended to with a sense of urgency; literally, phoophā was the talk of the town and the world for days; the social media space was particularly abuzz.. In the local parlance, in Haryana and the adjoining regions all over north India, phoophā is more than a relation. It wields enormous metaphorical power; phoophā is an omnipotent upside down unidirectional patriarchal hegemonic assertion that brooks no relational parallel. This patriarchal hegemonic assertion may ruffle the cultural studies domain the wrong way, but the residual in and through phoophā unfurled its folk flag unflinchingly in the protest march. It's a term of domination that the folks around here use to demonstrate more than they say their folkways. Phoophā, in this region, is not a word, but an interplay of power intrigues that has been nurtured into its present existence over generations of being. These four letters are just the tip and carries along a metaphorical iceberg; it's a latent cultural force that has more connotative potential than denotative. The phoophā and the marriage procession have very strong folk connotations; it runs in the protesters, the city, the citizens and the authorities; through phoophā, it was the 'folk' that throbbed back and asserted. The Residual manifested in the folk asserted back, thumping, 'thara phoophā folk is still alive'. That's the way of the folk, Raymond Williams asserts.

The residual, by definition, has been effectively formed in the past, but it is still active in the cultural process, not only and often not at all as an element of the past, but

as an effective element of the present. . . . Thus certain experiences, meanings, and values which cannot be expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practiced on the basis of the residue-cultural as well as social. . . . (Williams, ch.8)

This is how Raymond Williams conceptualizes the Residual. It's sufficiently evidenced through the research in the area in the last half a century- since the conception of the term- that the folk traditions- including the folk songs- are the elements of the Residual that have been "effectively formed in the past" but still flow along "as an effective element of the present", not dominant but "lived and practiced" nevertheless. They are not obvious, but are around; "we know it when we hear it" (Slobin 1). The folk songs as the manifestation of the Residual have been the slogans of the protest and have been the spirit-bearers in these protests.

Individuals project their voices- literally and figuratively- through their music, and their efforts can parallel, jumpstart, or coordinate with the needs of the collectives, sometimes organized into social movements. . . . Folk song as a form of resistance goes back to earliest recorded times, dating to the age of peasant uprisings, and flourished among people forced into new work conditions. (Slobin 86-87)

Mark Slobin is an American ethnomusicologist, a Winslow-Kaplan Professor of music Emeritus at Wesleyan University, the USA; has worked extensively on East European Jewish music, the klezmer music and the folk music traditions of the central Asian region (the folk music of Afghanistan, in particular) since 1967; has written a seminal treatise on the folk music, *Folk Music: A Very Short Introduction*. He informs, through his own field work in Afghanistan and elsewhere and through his interaction with other folkloristic scholars, that the folk songs have always been an integral part of the protest movements world over, as slogan on the placards, as war cry during marches, as spirit-raiser during sit-ins, as uniting force, as time-killer during long protests and as a linear wave that sways through the unconscious of all participants (to borrow from Carl Gustav Jung, the Swiss Psychologist). Eric Foner, who has

been chronicling labour songs for decades, observes that already by 1836 a song from the farms of Massachusetts had travelled to the cities of the USA to become a stamp-song of the working class protests.

Oh isn't it a pity that such a pretty girl as I

Should be sent to the factory to pine away and die?

Oh! I cannot be a slave

I will not be a slave

For I'm so fond of liberty

That I cannot be a slave. (Slobin 87)

In 1840s and later, William Wells Brown reports, the slaves composed new folk songs out of the lyrics and the tunes they had been adept at and sung them in unison while being transported to the far south to work in the corn fields or while working through the extremities of the farm life there.

We raise the wheat

They give us the corn

We bake the bread

They give us the crust

We peel the meat

They give us the skin

And that's the way

They take us in. (Slobin 87)

The songs were adapted to the particular locale, to the challenges and the form of protest with requisite changes in the lyrics; the songs then travelled far and wide in the south resonating in the fields, in the salve hamlets, in their festivals, etc; during the great migration of the late 19th and early 20th century, the songs travelled to the north and pulsated the slums of Pennsylvania, New York City,

Philadelphia, etc. Some of the songs flew offshore, inshore factually, to Africa and became part of the local fairs and festivities completing a full cycle of oppression, solace and compassion.

The Residual, as manifested in the folk (traditions), has always flowed along their people, through them carrying the 'salt-load' of their experiences, their essence of being and existing. The Residual, through the folk songs, has been the 'spirit-bearers' of the fairs, festivals, ceremonies, the epidemics, the pandemics and the protests; of everything collective. There are a few factors, to delineate, that make the folk songs what they are for these occasions, a war cry, slogans and the spirit songs; the protests being the focus, this paper studies this folk-protest pattern in that context only. The first factor is the process of creation of the folk songs; the folk songs have been created through a collective endeavour. They may have fallen upon an individual tongue, but they became the folk once they hummed a collective tune and were hummed collectively by the folk in a particular setting. The second factor is the process of their transmission. The folk songs have been transmitted orally, everywhere; even where they have been recorded, the transmission has been oral. This oral transmission requires deep connect with the ecosystem of the folk songs; that necessitates active- listening or performing- participation in the community celebrations as well as mourning. This process of creation and the transmission of the folk songs inculcate a very strong sense of collective being and existing among the participants. The protest movements are essentially 'collective', so the folk songs naturally fit in. The 'Diggers', a peasant movement in England as early as 14th century, were up against the king and his oppressive authorities; they stormed through villages singing songs they had been singing all through their lives, joined in along the way by band of brothers singing in unison; at nights, the whole countryside sang deep and wide from the hearth to the woods. A century or so later queen Elizabeth I ordered her military commanders to break Irish folk musical instruments because they had become the weapons of collective Irish resistance against the British occupation. In nearby highlands of Scotland, the Bagpiper steadfastly kept

the spirits of the protesters high for hundreds of years. In France, during the French revolution a few centuries later, the village folk stormed into Paris singing songs of their ancestors; they camped in the capital for years, thriving on their folk treasure. Off hand, the Persians, it is reported, lost their battle against the Greeks (the Persians had defeated the Greeks comprehensively in their earlier encounters) because their military band couldn't accompany them in the narrow gulf where they were trapped and eventually slaughtered by the Greeks!

The Native Americans in North America, the aboriginal in Australia, the Maoris in New Zealand, the Gonds and the Bhills in India fought against their oppressors tuned in to the songs of the collectives they had been brought up on. This rootedness of the folk songs in the collective being of the people is one of the factors that make them a natural fit-in for the protests. The third factor is the verbal and tonal structure of the folk songs. The folk songs, Mark Slobin observes, in all cultures have a simple verse pattern and are composed to simple tunes. Most of the folk musical instruments are single-stringed fiddle, flute or drums that can be learnt or played easily; the lyrics, being composed impromptu to be sung impromptu, are also simple; sort of 'be there for a few moments and be into the stream with ease'. The simple structure and the collective spirit of the folk songs make them a mark of the protest marches, everywhere, in every age. Pete Seeger, who had studied and recorded union songs and is considered an authority when it comes to the nature of the protest songs, has a point that corroborates the delineation of some pattern into the protest songs.

Social-movement songs nicely catch the overlap between the personal and the collectives. Like hymns and patriotic songs, union songs are songs with a message ... unlike most hymns and patriotic songs, union songs are usually composed by amateurs to suit a particular occasion, and have a short life. More often than not, they are simply new words to an older melody. (Seeger Introduction)

In the nineteenth century, streets of almost every industrialized city reverberated with the cries of protests of

the workers; some of the movements continued for years, while some kept their feet marching for decades, on and off. They sang of home, they sang of countryside, they sang of the life they had had; from Paris to London and beyond, they sang in unison and they sang of the same. That's the fourth factor. The villages having disintegrated into unrecognizable selves by the 'road', turned to cities in flocks looking for 'better' lives and opportunities. "If the road arrives, I think our songs will be lost" (Slobin 122), rue the Q'ueros of Peru. The song of the farmer girl in Massachusetts travelled with her to the workers' quarters in Boston; the man who had recently been 'transformed' into a worker from the farmer in Northampton brought along to London slums a heart full of the melodies of his ancestors; and, down-town Paris evenings witnessed the curious mix of smoke and the folk. Beginning 18th century, the folk from the villages made a wild rush to the cities carrying along their folk traditions, including the folk songs and instruments. In the ghettos of London, Boston, Paris and elsewhere, they sang the songs of longing and separation; the earliest elk of the human folk song tradition. When they protested, same folk paraphernalia became their prime weapon of resistance, defense and sustenance; source of their strength; and, a well acquainted fountain of solace. The folks from different quarters chipped in their fair share of tunes; the lyrics "adapted and changed" to the new circumstances and the tunes attuned themselves accordingly.

Old-time collectors thought that [the] folk music couldn't survive change because it was fixed, but they were wrong. People keep thinking that as villagers move to the city and as commercial media spreads across the world, [the] folk music will vanish. The famous folklorist Alan Lomax predicted a vast "cultural gray-out". But it hasn't happened. The reason is simple enough: folk music keeps changing, like so many aspects of human life, from the family to work to belief. (Slobin 6)

This is the fifth factor. The folk music keeps adapting and changing; and that explains the longevity of the folk music and its incessant presence as the 'spirit-bearer' of the folks; effectively formed in the past though, but it throbs on

not as an element of the past but as an effective element of the present, essentially as the Residual. Ladishah, a folk song tradition of the Kashmir region in India, sings of the kings who ruled the region a few hundred years back and also of the Abdullahs who still wield their net in Dal. Bella chao has not said goodbye; though it has been in the lungs, adapted and changed, for over two centuries. The next and the seventh factor is that the folk songs have been “the form of resistance since the earliest recorded times” (Slobin 86). Philip Foner who recorded the American labour songs of the nineteenth century corroborates Mark Slobin’s observations; Pete Seeger observed the same thread in the union songs. Foner, Seeger and Slobin, among others, assert, through their research, that the folk songs have been the instruments of resistance throughout. The eighth factor, the last but not the least, is that the folk songs sing of freedom, unequivocally and everywhere. From the peasant uprisings of the earlier times to the workers’ protests of the centuries closer, the folk songs had been the consistent link. The Residual has been throbbing along its folks earnestly, adapting and changing as the folks rolls on with the changed circumstances of their lives- the folk songs have always been around, from the caves to the ghettos!

Closer home, in India the folk music has been the music of protest throughout. The Rigveda, the oldest of the Vedas that was composed not later than 1500BCE, begins with a question to the ‘Supreme’; the Vedas and other scriptures contain hymns that speak of freedom and have anecdotes where protest is palpably manifested. It’s common knowledge that Lord Buddha’s renderings, musical and dialectical, were the songs of the protest in their spirit. The Greek historians record that during Alexander’s attack on India in 4th century BCE, Indian soldiers could be seen singing their wounds to sleep at the night break. The folk music was the guiding and uniting spirit, like the peasant protests elsewhere in the world, of the protests of the peasants in India; they protested against the kings, the zamindars, the sahuikars and the likewise, singing and dancing solemnly. They walked day and night, singing, through the woods, the valleys, the deserts, plateaus, the wastelands, etc. In the modern times, almost all protests

and movements against the British occupation of India had very strong folk music tinge. To mention a few of them, during the Indigo movement of the mid-nineteenth century the farmers of Bihar and Bengal held onto themselves through their folk songs, the movement and the momentum spread to other regions and went on for years fuelled by the folk chants. The Great Plains of India pulsed with the songs of freedom, devotion and protest during India's first struggle for independence from the British rule; the folk songs proved to be the war cry during the day and the wound-healer, the spirit-bearer, the soul-thread and the lullaby during the night. So much so that the national song of India, the Vandematram, was the folk-cry of the protest movement of the sadhus (saints) of Bengal. In the twentieth century when Mahatma Gandhi took over the reins of the freedom struggle, the folk songs struck with vengeance, as if. The singing of devotional songs, the songs of ancestors, the songs of longing, the songs of the land and the songs of freedom became the hallmark of every sit-in, the staple songs of the freedom movement everywhere. The people sang in their local tongues, the songs of universal spirit; Mahatma Gandhi himself sang along. For over three decades, India's freedom struggle was sustained by the folks in their folk ways making it a folk movement, essentially. The whole nation became a symphony of the Residual, all, the people, the land and the landscape, singing in unison the songs of freedom.

During the emergency of late 1970s, the nation was once again in its folk-yolk. College campuses, university corridors, city streets and village by-lanes, the folk pervaded the sloganeering, the sit-ins and the spirits; the folk songs, the folk instruments, the folk tunes, the folk motifs and the folk insignia spilled over everywhere. More recently, in 2021-2022, the farmers in India were up against the farm laws of the government. Though the protests spread far and wide, the National Capital Region was the major site of the protest; the farmers from around the nation held themselves up through rain, heat waves and the chilling winters for over a year until the farm laws were repealed. Day and night, the folk swayed and swerved the crowd. The folks came in singing and dancing folk, stayed put singing

and dancing folk and marched out singing and dancing folk. 'Thara phoopha' is the most recent assertion. From the Rigveda, or earlier, to the recent 'thara phoopha abhi zinnda hai', the Residual manifesting through the folk traditions of the land has had its fair share of throbbing; India has lived through its folk, it has throbbed through its folk and it has sung its freedom and protest through its folk. The Residual asserts continually, on and off.

The twentieth century can be dubbed as the "tumultuous century". The most 'civilized' societies behaved the most barbarically. The World War I and the World War II, where the flag-bearers of the civilized flags clashed flags, cost humans millions of lives, billions of resources and the priceless momentum. That was also the time, the beginning of the century particularly the decades of the Great Depression when universities in the USA under the Federal Development Project sent their professors and scholars to their native regions to collect/record their folk music, when the scholars from all walks of academic lives strived to 'preserve' the folk. They ventured beyond their 'red-brick-boxes'; ate, slept and suffered with the local tribes for years, for decades in some cases; got into their tongue; immersed themselves in the colours and contours of their lives, traditions and customs; and accumulated aplenty to know the unknown. Franz Boas, the 'Father of American Anthropology' for a reason or more, tried to get in the skin of the Inuit of the Baffin Island, Canada; he was so fascinated by what he learnt there that he spent much of his grey and the salt among the tribal inhabitants of the Pacific Northwest. Ruth Benedict, a prominent member of American Folklore Society and later president of the American Anthropological Association and a dedicated disciple of Franz Boas in the letter and feet-spirit of an anthropologist, worked among the Pueblos of the Southwestern United States, Kwakiutl of the Pacific Northwest and Dobu of New Guinea, among others; while Margaret Mead, of Franz Boas and Ruth Benedict's tribe, studied the traditions of the tribal of the Samoan Islands. David McAllester, a prominent figure among folklorists, worked for a long and arduous half a century to study and record the rich folk legacy of the Navajo musicians of

Arizona, southwest United States; his works remain a guiding light for many a folklorist who chose to trudge through the musical terrain of the southwest United States of America, or elsewhere. Many researchers, collectors and collaborators flocked to other lands than America and the islands in the Pacific Ocean. Julie Strand dedicated a good part of her life and academic resources to the study of the folk songs and traditions of the Sambla of Burkina Faso in West Africa; Eric Cherry (a folk song collector) and Charles Bird (a linguist) meandered for years through the west Africa. Steven Feld sheltered with the Bosavi people of Papua New Guinea; the Bosavi people had, he reported with astonishment, an elaborate system of classifying voices of over two hundred species of birds that inhabited the woods along with them. Richard Wolf came to India to get to the roots of the ritual music of the Kota people of Rajasthan and claimed that it was “tasteful to hear”. Henry Glassie lived with the people and the music of Ballymenone, a northern Irish village. Louis Dupree roamed the Middle East for decades; he once walked over two thousand kilometers from Turkey to Iran in the quest to know how songs might have travelled in ancient times. Mark Slobin traversed the tough, literally, politically and socially, terrains of Afghanistan chronicling their “rich and diverse” musical heritage. John Baily and Lorraine Sakata sauntered with the Java people in Indonesia while Hugo Zemp stringed with the Are’are of a tiny island in Polynesia; the Are’are people, very small group inhabiting one of the islands are self-acclaimed music experts, have an elaborate system of musical nomenclature and classification. Anthony Seeger took to the Suya in the Amazon; Marina Roseman, in the same quest, marooned herself with the Temiar of Malaysia while Ted Levin dwelt with the Tuvan in the vicinity. Zalman Kiselhof traversed the southern Russian empire and Josef Obrebski took to the western part of the empire, to the Ukrainian land and people. Joy Lu and Min Yang, in the meanwhile, concentrated on the folk music traditions of the Mosuo people of China. Succinctly, the scholars and the researchers fanned out in every nook and corner of the planet to look for the folk traces.

This zealous, frantic according to some scholars, attempt at the music of the folks 'revived' their 'roots' and that heralded what folklorists call the folk-revival. The folk revival, according to some scholars, was the pull of the roots, the call of the Residual. Quite interestingly, Raymond Williams, who gave the academia the term the Residual, himself was a 'residual' throbbing dormant in the 'red-brick-dorms' of a university in London, a few hundred miles off his roots in the Welsh countryside; and, he was also one of the leading scholarly lights that founded the Cultural Studies, an interdisciplinary discipline that was claimed by its exponents to be anti-disciplinary and brought the things of the folks on the study table. The second half of the twentieth century is of particular interest, for this paper in particular. Apart from Raymond Williams, there were thousands of like him in the campuses alone. The folks who had migrated to the cities a few generations back had their city-prints ready; ready to be in the campuses and elsewhere; they brought with themselves the songs and the spirit of the songs that their parents hummed, through their great-grand parents and grandparents, the songs of freedom. This phenomenon, over a varied chronic continuum, spread to all cities and campuses. A folk stream was flowing through London, to stick to one example that epitomized the circumstances and the situation in almost all big cities of the western world; and much of the eastern world later. In 1960s and '70s, the campuses of the major universities witnessed the protests of unprecedented scale, rhythm, colour, contour and tone. The campuses reverberated with the song the city had never heard before; they fell for that, fell to that. It was almost two decades since the WW II that, among other things, unleashed a chain of independence in the colonies of Asia and Africa. People from the colonies, once the gates were opened for them, rushed to their erstwhile kingdoms. Another folk streamlet was ready to join the stream that was already making waves in the city. Bob Dylan, the celebrated folk singer and the Noble laureate, became the voice of the protests; not only because he was a great singer, but also because he sang the spirit of the folks, he sang the folk, he sang the essence of the folk; his "Only a Pawn in Their Game" pulsated the protesters. "A Change Is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke, "Fortunate Son" by Creedence Clearwater

Revival, “Respect” by Aretha Franklin, “I Ain’t Marching Anymore” by Phil Ochs were some of the soul-throbs that ricocheted the milieu; all were the folk songs, adapted and changed to the prevailing mood and the circumstances; the Residual was asserting itself. Closer on the heels, beginning 2014 Hong Kong was the site of the fiercest pro-democracy movement in the recent past; quite curiously, it was led by the students of the city-state. Dubbed the “Umbrella Fight Movement” that was an improvisation on a local dialect phrase, the protesters used the slogans, songs and motifs from the local dialects instead of the standard language since they reckoned that the dialectical motifs conveyed their messages more powerfully and clandestinely, “Don’t Forget Why You Are Here”, “Basked in Light”, “Travelling around the Garden”. In the months following September this year, there have been protests in Iran against government’s brutal enforcement of compulsory hijab wearing; a young woman was hanged to death over her hijab code violation. ‘Bella chao’, a folk song, attunes the spirit of the protesting women; interestingly, bella chao is an Italian, not Iranian, folk song that guided the Italian protesters in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The instances discussed above suggest that the folk paraphernalia has been a universal connect in the protests, wherever and whenever. From the peasants’ uprisings of the early history to the students’ protests of the modern historical age, the folk paraphernalia, the folk music in particular, has been the universal connect. There are innumerable factors that go into, through and behind this phenomenon; some of them have been delineated above during the course of the argument. It’s true that them being of simple tonal and lyrical infrastructure have been a pertinent factor, so does the fact that they sing of universal human concerns over their existence like the longing, the separation, the home, the nature, the landscape, the ancestors, the journey and the everyday lives. These themes being of universal human collective, manifesting through the folk they trigger a chain of collective being, a stream that runs smooth through the present and beyond. Since the folk adapts and changes, the trigger remains in tunes with the contemporary. And that explains, quite plainly, why the folk

has been an integral element of all protest sites. That the folk songs, everywhere, sing of freedom peels off another layer. The conundrum, seemingly, is laid bare and open, but that is not all; that doesn't explain the folk-protest conundrum completely; something goes deeper to the core. A phenomenon so grave, diverse and universal cannot be at the beck and call of a few 'superficial' factors. There must be something that runs deeper along the core- a universal human connect that connects a universal human phenomenon in a strikingly uniform way; that strikes back every now and then, guided by uniform paraphernalia. At the core lays the essence of the folk traditions, the essence of the Residual. It's sufficiently evidenced through the research of the past over half a century that the Residual elements that are formed in the past but have not lost upon the present throb along not obvious but as manifested in and through the folk; the folk carries the Residual salt along and in matters of 'collective action' like the protests, the Residual asserts and pitch in the requisite salt. Through the works of Carl Gustav Jung, Swiss psychoanalytic who worked studiously on the Collective Unconscious for decades, that essence can be gleaned clearly. Very succinctly, Carl Jung postulated that the unconscious of the humans is imbued with 'imago dei' and this 'image of the God' in the human is the essence of being human. Further, it is collective and universal; it's in all human beings and works collectively. Like the Residual, it flows dormant, it's not obvious; it was essentially formed in the past; and, throbs along not as an element of the past, but as an effective element of the present. It creates a collective and universal ecosystem of being and existing with other elements of nature. As the tribal of west Africa puts it, "The meaning of my words is in the moisture of the breath that carries them" (Slobin 5). The collective unconscious is the storehouse of this moisture. Without this salt and moisture, the songs remain just the tunes and the lyrics, an ensemble of words tuned to musical notes. There is, for sure, a song in this ensemble, but not the spirit; they sing a melody, but not a harmony; they sing happiness, but not the ecstasy; they sing mood, but not the bliss; they sing an effect, but not an impact; they sing drops, but not streams. The folk songs carry the imprints of the collective human unconsciousness, they carry that essence

God imbued the humans with, they carry the moisture of collective being and existing, they carry the salt that has been flowing along since the stream. Whenever and wherever a 'collective protest', the Residual takes over and strikes the collective unconscious chord with its paraphernalia of the folk.

The folk asserts thus, phoophā's way. The very word, to those who can feel the pulse of it, is a metaphorical stream that carries loads of denotative and connotative denominations. The moment it, phoophā, is played out, it unleashes a gust of inherited collectives; the whole folk infrastructure is unleashed. Phoophā carries the salt and moisture of the Residual and is treated thus. It's not the phoophā, a four letter word that marched in the streets of Rohtak, but it was the march of the Residual; asserting through the folk, collectively and unconsciously.

Note

¹the first consonant sound, /f/, in the word phoophā is bilabial than the labio-dental which is the case in English and Farsi (Persian); in the dialects of northern India, the consonant /f/ is bilabial plosive; in English, the consonant /f/ is labio-dental fricative. In socio-economic-political dimensions of the region, northern India, phoophā wields tremendous power. Socially, he is the one to whom the 'honour' of a family is married to; economically, being the keeper of family's honour, he always receives in cash, kind and respects; and politically, he sits at the pinnacles so much so that even the elders in the family 'look up' to him. In ceremonial gatherings of all sorts, he is the one to be kept in good humour; so much of it, there are countless jokes around the region about phoophā's skin deep honour and consequent anger. On this connotative infrastructure rests the structure of feeling of phoophā, the folk institution.

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