



F I E L D R E P O R T

Adivasi Songs from Odisha

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The *Review of Agrarian Studies* is happy to present, for the first time, a multimedia feature. This is a field report of a different kind: the farm and other rural songs featured here are from a project to archive the songs of the Adivasi people of Odisha.

Editor

The selection of songs featured here is from a project whose aim is to construct a comprehensive archive of the songs of tribal Odisha.¹ We have conducted two field trips so far, and have recorded songs from the repertoire of 12 Adivasi communities from the districts of Koraput, Malkangiri, Ganjam, Gajapati, Kandhamal, Mayurbhanj, Dhenkanal and Angul. Our aim is eventually to cover all the 62 Scheduled Tribes that are represented in the population of Odisha.²

Three songs, essentially agrarian in character, are presented here. They were recorded in 2004.

bēṭudē kaḍū bēṭudē

This is a farmstead lullaby that women of the Kondh tribe sing to the young paddy crops as they transplant them; it is also a lullaby for the babies that the women carry in slings when they go to work. The song was recorded in the terraced paddy fields of Putsil, Koraput.

Language: Kuvi. **Region:** Putsil, Semiliguda Block, Koraput District, Odisha.

¹ The project, titled “Tribology,” is funded by the Integrated Rural Development of the Weaker Sections of India (IRDWSI), an NGO based in Semiliguda, Koraput District, Odisha.

² See <http://www.orissa.gov.in/stsc/STlist.htm>.



Visit http://ras.org.in/adivasi_songs_from_odisha to listen to and download the song.

yemmā lirinū suā suā, pāni suā suā

This song belongs to the class of songs that the Porjas refer to simply as toila song - after the single-stringed gourd shell instrument that the Porjas use for accompaniment. The singers both pluck the toila string and beat on its gourd shell with rings they wear specially for the instrument. In this song, the artists seek to please the rain gods, and appeal to their ancestral musicians to join them in chorus and make their song irresistible to the clouds. The song is sung by the Porja musicians Balram Boi and group.

Language: Porja. **Region:** Porjapungar, Koraput District, Odisha.



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bellē ēta kiniwā tiyō

A Kuvi prayer-song for the well-being of the crops.

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