Chapter 1, Definitions

Introduction of ‘Folk’ (the difference between ‘folk’ and ‘loka’):

The term ‘folk’ is having different nuances not only in different countries but in different regions of the same country. Subsequently, the scope of research between the terms ‘folk’ from Western perspective and ‘loka’ from Eastern context, whether they convey the same connotation or compensate each other or combine all the tenets without any complacency and compose a complete circumference, creates a creative charm among all academicians or has become contagious amongst research scholars. To deal with the first, the research proposes to differentiate between two indigenous terms ‘folk’ and ‘loka’. It begins with a question, a question that triggers the root: ‘are they same having same tone and temperament or they just denote two different zones rather sides of the same coin?’. A lot of similarities and dissimilarities can be found between these two terms in various spatio temporal conditions and due to a change of geographical location. In Vaidic culture, it is overused to denote the notion of ‘man’ or ‘mankind’. Nevertheless, it definitely conveys a sense of earthly and celestial affairs. The discussion here foregrounds the wide spectrum of its variation in terms of its sources and resources. Beforehand the research tries to initiate the semantic aspect of ‘folk’ for foregrounding further research through the help of various dictionaries which will introduce the readers to the world of conceptual meaning enabling them to unfold the unveiled mystery behind its etymology and evolution.

These shades of meanings are explained from the perspective of its etymology and characteristics. These are as follows:

1. *Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* defines the term as:
   - People, especially those of a particular group or type
Traditional to or typical of a particular group or country, especially one
where people mainly live in countryside, and usually passed on from
parents to their children over a long period of time

Folk art expresses something about the lives and feelings of ordinary
people in a particular group or country, especially those living in the
countryside

2. *Oxford Dictionary* depicts the term:

- Relating to the traditional art or culture of a community or nation
- Relating to or originating from the beliefs and opinions of dictionary
  people

3. *Merriam Webster Dictionary* denotes:

- People in general used to talk to a group of people in a friendly and
  informal way
- A certain kind of people
- A group of kindred tribes forming a nation
- The great proportion of the members of a people that determines the group
  character and that tends to preserve its characteristics form of civilization
  and its customs, arts and crafts, legends, traditions and superstitions, and
  superstitions from generation to generation
- Plural: a certain kind, class, or group of people
- Plural: people generally

*Rig-veda*, the most original text recording the history of the ancient age, contains the
‘loka’: 
Navyatasidantariksham sirsnodyo samoabortata

Padavyavumirdisha Shotrattalokamatakalpayan| (10.90.14, the Rig Veda).

Translation: Here in this quotation it avers the process of creation and how Lord Shiva has created sky from his head, the earth from his feet, from his ear the regions. This is the way to construct the world’s flesh.

In Yayrveda it refers to people: Rebati ramadhab asmin jonab gostesmil loke smin khshye hoibo stmapagal. (3.21 the Shukla Yajurveda).

Translation: With surveys, one who can disperse darkness among herds, can diminish the depression and desperation of people.

The Sama Veda uses the term ‘loka’ to denote both ‘people’ and the place of habituation, ‘the earth’. Here the term connects between the content and context. The Atharva veda is not an exception to that. In Kand II and XVI, the term ‘loka’ directly refers to people along with a selfish wish for their ‘earthly’ fulfilment. It rather evokes a sense of wish fulfilment of men, a mundane materialistic tendency. Amarkosa, traditionally a significant text in lexicography, comprises a prayer that chants ‘loka’ quite several times signifying ‘people’. Here it says an analogy that people should bend, mould and stretch in the manner the string of the bow is stretched. It adds flexibility to the ‘humanity’ to goad the individual to the farthest goals, quite unreachable for the common folk. The Ramayana, a text that reforms and records the foundation of Indian culture, uses the term in variegated ways. But there is one specific example that emphasizes ‘people’:

Sarbalokpiyamatyakatbasarbalokahiteratam
Sarbalokoanurajjjetkathamatwaanenkarmana|

Translation: One who detaches himself from all chains of domesticity and dedicates for the yeoman’s service is always loved and respected for his denouncement.
Shreemad Vagavad Geeta, the quintessence of Vaidik knowledge, shows the wide dimension of the term:

Yasmataksharmotitotahamaksharadapichottam:

atotsmilokebedechaprathita:purushottoam| (Shreemad Vagavad Geeta 15.18).

Translation: Here the line draws a line of demarcation between possible and impossible, perishable and imperishable and changeable and unchangeable.

He is here none other than ‘purushottam’, the ultimate one. Therefore, the term ‘loka’ has its rich resource of meaning magnifying the majesty of ‘man’. In Veda, almost in every case, it emphasizes places with few exceptions. The advent of Sanskrit literary tradition has diversified its meaning. Consequently, it can be used in the sense of public or people of the society and sometimes non-educated, artless class of the society. Above all references definitely suggest that at one point of time the domain of knowledge loses its link with ‘loka’.

The difference between ‘Laukik’ knowledge and ‘Vaidik’ knowledge can be understood or clarified by Kundanlal Upreti:

If what is not there in the Vedas is laukik, then the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, Abhijnana Shakuntala, are all folk literature but they are not considered like that. (Upreti, p. 2).

It is true that Vedik and post-Vedik literature are composed in the form of stories and these stories or anecdotes are essential components of folklore. If the readers try to find out the etymology it connotes the positive aspects of the meaning. Pt. Rahul Sankrutyaayan has firmly supported these two basic points by the following statement:

Loka has made from root verb ‘lokru’. It has a prefix “dha” that makes it ‘darshan’. The word means ‘to see’. So the meaning of the word ‘loka’ according to Sanskrit etymology is ‘the seer’. Entire mass of people who see will be termed as ‘loka’. (Pt Rashul Sankrutyaayan Hindi 1).
Here it is worth mentioning that sages who have attained that philosophical status and quietness of the soul and mind are called as ‘seers’ not ‘creator’. Moreover, etymological concept of ‘loka’ or ‘folk’ has not yet received that metaphoric dimension. It can definitely be clarified when the readers try to probe the source and the origin of ‘folk’. Endless discussions took place only to establish the identity of these two terms and their basic differences. The following discourse of Bandopadhyay interrogates the basic lexical definitions:

There are many questions arising out of the lexical definitions of ‘folk’ and ‘folklore’. If folks are defined as common people, then who are those ‘uncommon people’ or ‘folks’? (Debprasad Bandopadhyay Folklore and Folk-Language: Myth or Reality?)

A path breaking question it is as there is no relevance or certainty or identification between a ‘folk’ and ‘non-folk’. Further Allan Dundes traces a similar question regarding its flexibility:

A folk or peasant society is but one example of a ‘folk’ in the folkloristic sense. Any group of people sharing a common linking factor, e.g., an urban group such as a labour union, can and does have folklore. ‘Folk’ is a flexible concept which can refer to a nation as in America folklore or to a single family. The critical issue in defining ‘folk’ is: what groups in fact have traditions? (Dundes, A Revolutionary Premise in Folklore Theory, p.13)

Here the research tries to highlight the various concepts and conceptions among folk regarding ‘folk’ not only in India but outside as well. Normally, they are considered to be uneducated people inhabiting at the lower stratum of society. Sociological study of folk provides a valid reason of it. Pandit Danodar Satvadekar provides a poetic definition of ‘loka’ and ‘jana’. According to him, ‘loka’ refers to one type of human being and ‘jana’, those who are engaged with ‘prajanana’. Therefore, Atmajojona says: “Loka only sees, observes bit do not take only progressive change”. Moreover, he continues to inform us that thinking power that is ‘manan’ is the essence of ‘manushya’ and ‘nor’ are those who are normally separated from worldly pleasures.
Folkloristic study all over the globe gives rise to the term and describes both the ‘adjectivity’ and the objectivity of the term. They are of the opinion that there is no geographical or religious connection between these two terms rather they tried to probe into the psychology of ‘folk’; be it personal or in groups –

It (Loka) indicates a specific group of people and at the same time it includes all such groups of people with identical cultures respectively. In fact it works as an adjective made available to literature and life. (P. 1-3, Preface of Hindi Sahitya ka Brihad Itihas (Long History of Hindi Literature), ed. Pt rahul Saankrutyaayan and Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyay).

Dr. Hazariprasad’s emphasis on ‘folk’ is something different from traditional dealings. Therefore, it tries to find some intricate connections not with the books but with life. Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyay talks about the ancient nature of the term and demonstrates it on the basis of its modernity and eternity:

‘Loka’ in real sense, are those people living in their ancient ways, detached from the influence of cultured and materially developed people. (Hindi Sahitya ka Brihad Itihas (Long History of Hindi Literature), ed. Pt Rahul Saankrutyaayan and Dr. Krishnadev Upadhyay).

Dr. Parmer’s definition of ‘loka’ is quite old fashioned-

‘Loka’ is common people which includes entire human race. The term is beyond discrimination and is a kinetic unit of society. (Parmer, Bharatiya Lokasahitya, p 10).

Upreti explains the term extensively when he takes the elements of ‘culture’ and ‘tradition’ under the consideration regarding the very nature of ‘folk’-

The word ‘loka’ has ascended from its limited meaning. It serves as a carrier of tradition and emotional expressions... to qualify, what is known as culture is not at all different from ‘loka’. (Upreti, Lokasahitya Ke Pratimaan, p. 3).

Jaymall Parmer very categorically defines the term keeping aside the traditional etymological aspect or meaning. He says: “loka is specific noun for a person, who observes the world around him, enjoys it and this vision leaves an imprint on his life”. He also anticipates the
consequent change in human life and is having a pejorative concept about the need and neat existence of human being. He says –

‘Loka’ is prestigious human existence running since centuries. ‘Loka’ was existing and it is existing. It is possible that it will not exist tomorrow as it is being transformed in modernity. It would not exist as ‘Loka’ tomorrow but it exists today in humanly form as well as cultural form. (Parmer, *Loksahitya: Tatvdarshan ane Mulyankan*, p. 82).

Viral Shukla points out in his seminal research that the oral version of ‘loka’ is very strong and genuine. In this context Dr, Hastua Sedani tries to connect ‘loka’ with traditional lifestyle. Dr. Vasudev Sharan, one of the pioneering folklorists, finds out the philosophical aspect of the term and firmly convinces that it is one clue to perceive human psychology and its existence. He, therefore, avers that ‘loka’ is an umbrella term putting together the depth and the vastness of the present, past and future. In his own words:

‘Loka’ is ocean of our life; it contains past, present and future of us. ‘Loka’, its mother earth and human being as its manifestation is the new spiritualism of our age’. (Agravaal, *Sammelan Patrika, Loka Sanskriti Visheshak*, p. 64).

Hence, it is quite clear that how vast and extensive it is as it negates to be bound by any spatio temporal condition so much so that it also dilutes the existence of human being.

Prof. Allan Dundes begins his discussions with the functions of ‘loka’ and ‘folk’ quite distinctly. Invariably the discussion includes other cultural aspects of ‘folk’ and deals how the ambiance of ‘folk’ is fabricated:

The term folk can refer to any group of people whosoever who share at least one common factor. It does not matter what the factor is. It could be common occupation, language or religion; but what is important is that a group formed for whatever reason will have some tradition which it calls its own. (Dundes, *The Study of Folklore*, p. 2).

The issue is led forward quite interestingly by Dr. Badriprasad Pancholi. He talked about these terms separately and through his analogy shows the inseparability between the terms.
At last the research can conclude that these are traditional cultural concepts. The word ‘tradition’ itself is derived from Latin word ‘tradre’ meaning ‘to hand over or to deliver’ and ‘culture’ is coined from Latin ‘cultura’ which means ‘cultivation’. The genesis of these words indicates the indigenous quality i.e. mobility- a subject to change, develop and decipher the traditional cultural aspect of a language, race and nation in the long run or in the days to come.
Name of Baul:

To begin with Baul, the research must make a mention that they are mainly music minstrel partly separated from family surrounding and they come to be known as dedicated ‘sadhus’. Baul is the conglomeration of action and consequent reaction to folklore, Buddhist rituals and thought process, Islamic Sufi concept Philanthropic concepts of Vaishnava and yogic process which are carried out for more than thousand years. They are human centric and ‘guru’ centric. ‘Guru’ takes a prime importance in both their action and thoughts .They think without ‘guru’ everything is ‘guruttohin’ that is unimportant. Therefore, they distinctly follow the path trodden, shown or followed by their ‘gurus’ or teachers.

They are above of any cultural bias and superstition. They are the real ‘untouchables’ from the perspective of social hierarchy but are really untouched by any sort of short-sightedness and religious rigidity. They have ‘the clear stream of reason’ that directs them to reach to the world of perfection. Therefore, they believe in optimistic philosophy as an object of life. Wide circumspection is their strength. Soil is the source of Baul and they are tuned by folklore. They adhere to the theory of man, manush tattoo. Subsequently they turn out to be deadly against any trace of race, complexity of colour, biasness of books, the contamination of caste and rotation of rebirth. They are the worshippers and sons of soil, the earth, a place where people toil to achieve success. Women sources restore power in them and rejuvenate their inept and indifferent souls. Hence, the religion they propagate is of their own stemming out of the simplicity of their feeling and thinking and is, therefore, pure, unpolluted, colourful and rich.

However, in the beginning the research tries to focus on its etymology. The word is first used in Shree Krishna Vijaykavya written by Maladhar Basu:
Translation: They are naked Bauls who resembled Rakkhas roaming around forest and barren places.

In *Chaityanya Charitamrita* the word is repeated for five times. It is worth mentioning that these words are poetically used with a rich tinge in it. Indubitably it adds salt to the age old discussions of the theory of Baul:

*Baul k kohio loke hoilo Aul, Baulere kohio hate na bikai chaul, Baulk kohio kaje nihiko aul, Baulk kohio iha koriyache Baul*

Translation: Tell to a Baul that he has become an ‘Aul’, informs him that rice is not getting sold in the bazaar. A Baul has no skill in any work. Tell him this is told by none other than a Baul.

Most remarkably these four lines delineate a world of action and activity. At the same time it brings into focus the speciality of their characters and features. Basically the word ‘Baul’ means (*udas*) indifferent: indifferent to money, popularity, reputation, jealousy and petty power politics of the society. There are endless debates regarding its origin. Few think it is derived from Hindi ‘Baul’, denoting mad. They are self-motivated, self-concentrated and self-satisfied unaffected by any pomposity of outside world. Socio-religious tussle cannot infuse any change in them. They are mostly self-driven in all respects of life. Though economically challenged, they are quite oblivious about it. Others think that Baul is devised out from Sanskrit ‘batul’ and ‘byakul’, another term suggesting ‘madness’, an anxious personality.
Normally the question comes that why it is so confusing and problematic. Answer is simple. It is not term given and addressed by them. The readers may trace the use of Baul the texts like ‘Shree Krishna Vijay’, composed during 15th and 16th century. The writers used these terms only to mean mad and ‘senseless people’ [definitely about external world]. Critics also view that the word recurs quite several times in the conversation between Shree Chaitnya Mahaprabhu and Adwaitacharya. Different parts of Bengal still call Bauls ‘mad’ because of their nature and characteristics for being quite different from the average trend of people. It is their belief that Bauls are termed because of their disordered nature and appearance. Some opine that in Northern part of India there is ‘bouven’, a minority part which is very similar with Bauls in all terms. There may be a possibility that emigration from that place due to any unavoidable circumstance forces them to settle in undivided West Bengal and later on as per the similarity they came to be known or named as Baul. It is worth mentioning that Bauls are adjectified as ‘aul’. It is a conjecture that ‘aul’ comes from ‘akul’ and Baul comes from ‘byakul’; both having the same connotation that is ‘restless’. During that period of that time people used term ‘batul’ only to mock them because of their uncouth nature and song culture. Hence, critics opine that ‘batul’ may be one source of the word, a word that refers to the petulant people who are baseless and uncontrolled by their nature. Dr. Brajendranath Sil avers that ‘dhaul’ is the root of Baul. Abdul Halim thinks ‘dhaul’ is originated from ‘dhaulia’, an Arbi word. This theory is very specific in the sense that later on Muslim singers came to be popular as ‘dhaul’ and the word recurs in their songs quite frequently. Most importantly ‘byakul’ (restless) and ‘batul’ (talkative) are the roots of the words behind such history. The reason is during that point of time these wayside singers are not at all considered as respectable or position able. Here the word ‘batul’ also denotes a characteristic meaning that is ‘apadartha’ i.e. good for nothing in English. It is also believed that Aul Chand was the first practitioner and propagated the concept of Baul. After constant transformation through
generation after generation, people receive the term as Baul, though they are still called ‘aul’ Baul. It may be due to this reason.

In the first half of 19th Century critics try to fix the meaning but it has been used in different ways and in different notations. S.M. Lutfar Rahman thinks Baul is an indigenous group of singers. The word Baul is twice used; one in first act and another in the second act of Bidigdho Madhab. Here also the characters are very close to those in every aspect in relation to the Bauls. Rahaman considered ‘bajir’, ‘bijil’ or ‘bijal’ may be the other etymological sources of the word. He also of the opinion ‘bajri’ used by the Buddhist philosophers may be one of its sources. Gene [BIJ] is the creator of human being. People who try to restrict this genetic transformation are called ‘bajradhar’. That is why Mr. Rahman thinks worshipper in ‘bajra’ theory, i.e. ‘bajradhan’ is the root of Baul. Ahamad Sharif again viewed the same with a pinch of salt in it saying Buddhists are popular as ‘bajrakul’. Hence, here Bajrakul is very close to be threaded with Bauls.

Finally, it can be stated that there are some critics who are of different view regarding its meaning, shift of meaning and the consequent evaluation as an after effect dating and ranging from the earliest texts like Charyapada, the original text of Bangla as language, and systems / rituals like Nathpantha to modern Bengali texts and analysis. To bring the discussion to a nutshell, the research decrees that Baul is a group rather religious group of singers who sings as a troupe and is seemed as a ‘samproday’ (tradition), people of a sect and a cult of culture named approximately one thousand years ago. Though religion is their invariable identity, surprisingly they are not the strict followers of any traditional practised religion or religious rituals of society. For them no religion is ideal, only own nature is real that nurtures the sole spirit within the soul. Belonging to different religious beliefs and practices by birth, they renounce all ramifications of religion considering them as backlogs that hinders free movement. It is their originality and novelty that flies the faces of so called
cultured educated elite people of Bengal. However, they may be identified either Hindu or Islam or whatever, it is their local name nominated by their neighbours but the brand name in today’s technical language is Baul.
Who are Bauls?

“What’s in a name” aptly stated by Shakespeare in his famous *Romeo and Juliet* though it is the ‘name’ only that leads one to fame. A Baul is not a Hindu or Muslim rather a man and beyond man a *moner manush*. They have no debate regarding ‘Quran’ and ‘Puran’. They met for the union of man and song. Their union stands for the union of ‘sur’ and ‘song’. Unmistakably Bauls are unanimous so far as their ‘name’ is concerned. They who are neither solely Muslim nor Hindu make Baul altogether. But Muslims of East Bengal [East Pakistan] and West Bengal are called ‘fakir’. ‘Fakir’ also contains indigenous names in different places. Somewhere they are called ‘*nera*’ (bald headed) ‘fakir’, somewhere they are called ‘be-shara’ ‘fakir’ or ‘masfati’/’bedati fakir’. Bengali word ‘nera’ means a man with clean/shaved head. It was one of the rituals of Vaishnavism. Apparently it appears to be very confusing because being Muslim he/she follows the Hinduism without any yammering. It definitely incarnates the spirit of acceptance of all resources. Further the research tends to dig the history especially Pal dynasty because during that time Bangladesh became the hub of ‘Bauddhik upasana’. They were divided into two; the Mahayanas and Hinayanas. Innumerable riffraff were the followers. After the invasion, most of them were ‘*shahadaed*’ (a term signifying the same what is called baptism in Christianity) into muslims. But surprisingly after such transformation they did not discard the old rituals though they were practically renounced by Hindu sect. Despite such sudden segregation from the society, they adhered to the age old customs of past religion although they are now known as ‘fakir’. As they still maintain Vaishanavite system of devotion, they are bare headed just like Buddha or Chaitnya Mahaprabu. It is noteworthy that muslim contention of worship and Vaishnavite tradition on the other hand does not contradict and interrupt their swift process of progress. They are deeply impelled by the Sufi movement. Simultaneously they are sanely influenced
by Chaitanya Mahapraavu. But the balance is unmistakable. They are able to keep up the tone and temperament, the body and main gesture in relation to the method of signing.

A major portion of people living in the lower stratum of the society are really down trodden by elite Brahmins and as a result they used to live totally in the outskirt of common habituation. They took resort in Vaishnavite religion. They were sarcastically called ‘nera-neri’ to identify their sudden shift from Buddhism to Vaishnavism. Birbhavara was the person for such tremendous transformation. Exceptions are also there even in muslim group of followers. For example ‘beshara’, ‘suariyat’ and others were reluctant to observe Islamic rituals.

Probing into the matter, the research can trace four types of theoretical bases among Muslim followers. They are respectively –‘Shariyat’, ‘Jarikat’, ‘Hakikat’ and ‘Marfat’. ‘Shariyat’ means unflinching belief in Islamic rituals propounded by Hazrat Muhammad. ‘Shariya’ is definitely a medium of communication with Allah and decides the internal as well as external sources. At the same time it is worth mentioning that it the process seldom emphasizes on its intrinsic realization or value. More or less it centres the following occasional aspects –‘Kalma’ (single minded faith in God or Allah), ‘Namaj’ (daily prayer), ‘Roja’ (starvation in the month of Ramjan), ‘Jakat’ (to emphasize the needy people) and ‘Hoj’ (pilgrimage) Makka. They conjecture these to be an indispensable part of mutual connection or devotion towards God.

‘Tarik’ is very common in the sense it frequently recurs in sufi and all branches of literature with the commutation of ‘patti’. In 8th and 9th century especially Muslim countries ‘Tarik’ was the path finder of his own as well others’ spiritual acclamation /culmination. But here also the path that it originally denotes is limited. Traditionally one has to go through, just
like a *murid* [disciple], *sadhan* and *bhajans* as directed or decided by Murshid [guru]. It is believed that directed way by the Tarik is the ideal way for spiritual emblem.

‘Haraik’ is one who knows/perceives the real meaning of the essence of God. ‘Maufat’ on the other hand signifies ‘real knowledge’. Noticeably all the stages are the stages of escalation leading from one extreme of another. Here it evokes a sense ‘divyagyan’, the upper step of achieving absolute knowledge, a knowledge that makes him forgetful about his own existence and therefore leads him to the ultimate, the Almighty. In different terminology ‘touhid’ is the delusion about one’s own identity that also goads for divine enchantment. Hence, these types of ‘fakirs’ are called ‘marfati fakir’. On the other hand, sadhaks scattered in the entire parts of West Bengal belonging to Hinduism are called ‘Bauls’. Besides Rasik Vaishnav, ‘sadhakas’ like Rasik Pantha, Raganuga Panthi Vaishnav are extremely popular and significant considering their names known and typically designated according to the culture of different segments of West Bengal. Here ‘Rasik’ is a significant term bearing the load of their devotion, knowledge, forbearance and love. Vaishnav Sahitya is replete with these words. Random discussion with dictionary marks it as an enlightened man. It is stated one who succeeds typical ‘sadhana’ is called ‘Rasik’ or ‘Siddha Purush’. Interestingly no printed document consisting their theory and philosophy can be traced. Song is the only medium rather authentic document that is the be all and end all about their history of existence. Song is the mirror of their self revelation.
Modern trend of Bauls:

Song is the supreme form of art. Music must be interpreted as a part of culture, the product of human society. Society is the mirror of human being. Therefore, anything in this world can properly be understood, evaluated and digested from the perspective of human society. Here it means that the songs by Bauls have undergone a drastic change. To measure such major change and its influence can properly discussed if the research points out the reflexions.

Obviously everything is in the process of progress through the transformation of ‘tradition’. It is definitely a game of ‘tradition and individual talent’. The phrase is / seems to be ambiguous. But it is as simple as this that it is talent which transforms and transfixes the ‘tradition’ making a trend and it is individual talent which helps keep a balance between ‘tradition’ and the subsequent transformation with the invent rather evolution of technology. Here the research tries to trace the traditional Bauls and transformed Bauls tangible in time.

21st century is the other name of ‘digital world’. Everywhere there is infallible sign of modernity. Here the struggle for existence’ is very vibrant and vigilant, the slight indifference and negligence can derail or slacken the process of improvement and can cause extinction. Therefore, it is too difficult to believe especially for those traditional stereotypical minds that Bauls also moulded their age old model and modulates a specific pattern to motivate their followers or move the process for ‘further progress in specialization’. ‘Tradition’ is root and root can never be changed, a deep rooted notion among people. As Bauls are intensively connected to the soil, such a change meaning a change for the sake of modernization is not widely accepted even though it is permeable. But naturally there should be a negotiation between tradition and modernism. Hence the research prefigures to focus on the aspects of ‘tradition’, traditional change and its effect on so called traditional minds.
Bauls also got affected by the international market. As a result they imbibed catchy words and slightly westernized terms with musical interludes. Now-a-days Baul compositions comprise the structure of metaphorical songs through the use of enigmatic jargons known as ‘sandhya-bhasa’ (dark language), intrusion of socio-political references without any base and complete inversion of gesture. Shwatinath Jha states:

From 14\textsuperscript{th} century onwards the subject matter of Baul songs started to extend. The advancement of communication and technology helped them flourish their songs and make their voice reach toward the global audience. Bauls in course of their journey to the abroad came to know about western culture, they started to fuse alien times, techniques, gimmicks in their songs, although they assimilate this influence in their songs in their own way (p .56).

During the time of survey, the research has observed a number of songs which are distinctively demarcated by specific working, rhythm, singing style and mode of representation. Modernized instruments make those songs either accordant or discordant irrespective of different classes / types of audience. Birbhum especially Suri, the capital city of the district, Bolpur Shantiniketan part is the cradle for them. There in different ‘akhras’ (a type of small muddy room meant for practice thatched with straw) and ‘ashrams’ the livelihood of the present Bauls is uniquely different from the earlier and makes a stark contrast with past. They are more sophisticated in terms of choice and manners. They composed to lure the young ones according to their taste. Here the research can show the change:

\begin{verbatim}
Age tribenir khabar janre mon / Tatta jene matta hole kam
Ripu tor hobe domon / Sadhan kor Tibeni hobe nirupan|
\end{verbatim}

(Translation- Heartily you have to be in search of Tribeni, the place of confluence burning the all expectations and the carnal desire. To dominate heart and soul over such petty attractions, one must undergo ‘sadhana’, deep meditation).
Come faster my young brother/ Rajrajeswar darshane

Here pure love-e bhasi sobe/ Present hoye klanto ashrame

Jahar for we vogi lanchona/ be careful tai vulona

Always koi ei leg vabona/ nothing fear tar shomon.

Translation: Control your trust, transform your best into love and destroy your best with pure love to successful in ‘sadhana’.

‘Akhra’ or ‘ashram’ concepts are rare at present. Many of them started living in city especially in a well connected place where communication, earning and audience are mostly available. Field work says that in West Bengal Bauls are interspersed in Krishnanagar (Nadia District), Murshidabad, capital city of Murshidabad district, Suri, Rampurhat, Ilumbazar, and Bolpur (Birbhum district) areas. Amongst them Bolpur is a tourist place, Tarapith is a ‘shakatipith’ and Joydev is famous for Baul Mela (fair). Naturally these places because of such reasons / rather extra facilities became the centre of attraction for the Bauls. Consequently many beggars / insolvent people from the surrounding places took interest in them, started listening their songs and style, following them and after few days / years they also start their business almost in the same fashion. Therefore, the aesthetic appeal or authenticity becomes a grave concern simply because they are merely imitators, not born Bauls. Here the research includes of such lyrics devoid of any flavour of artisan:

Gari cholche ajob kole/ Diye mati poripati

Agun jalai hawar bole...

E garir bol bearing harek spring tar,

Emon fit kora akbar thread kete gele

Nebe na to r jora|
Translation: Oh! Dear driver, drive your car fast, by turning your starring to the right or to the left, and by feeding oil to the engine … when the engine of the body becomes out of order, the wheel of the soul remains but where is the salvation?

It is merely a buffoonery of salvation. The research here offers a real taste of salvation through traditional Baul:

\[
\begin{align*}
Bhakti \text{ bina se dhon mile na} \\
Ache bhakti rattan amulya rattan \\
Ajatone pabe na|
\end{align*}
\]

Translation: Devotion is the essence of salvation otherwise salvation is insolvable. Those who have devotion are possessed with real wealth.

Here the research includes another song where the immaturity and impurity will be quite feasible:

\[
\begin{align*}
Tor khorid kora mobile er wrong number e koris call \\
Tar khabar ki pabi? Mon tui bol \\
Hello chere Hari bol|
\end{align*}
\]

Translation: You are miscalling to a wrong number from your newly purchased new phone. How can you get to talk to him? Therefore, instead of hello you speak to Hari.

Further comparison between traditional and modern compositions will extract the meanness and shallows of such cult. It adds to such imperfection:

\[
\begin{align*}
Ogo sakhi, tui ki tai parbi? \\
O je baro kothin pirit/ seshe rastai bose kandbi|
\end{align*}
\]
Translation: Oh it is really tough how you will do it. The tight bond of love will make you cry endlessly.

_Piriti khathaler antha / lagle pore chare na_

_Gole male gole male pirit koro na_|

Translation: Love is like the gum of jackfruit. Once you are in it, you cannot make yourself free. Therefore, where there is trouble, you should not make any initiative to love.

Therefore, the clearer picture is that traditional Bauls were very careful or serious about their art. In modern language they focus on perfection while modern Bauls focus on commercialism, ‘sadhna’ is their way to achieve such goals while professionalism is their way to capture temporary popularity.

Now-a-days Bauls are directly connected to political parties and sometimes act upon political parties and act upon political agendum. It the research takes back a look on the epistemology, they render themselves the sons of soil which is of slightly greyish or saffron, a colour symbolizing sacrifice. Therefore, root wise they are miles away now from its root. Only they are concerned about profile and prolific market demand though it is key to survive in this world of challenges. The research can refer to one of such songs which is composed on Mamata Banerjee, the Chief Minister of West Bengal. The purpose is clear like daylight. It can be stated how careless and indifferent recently Bauls are that they are quite oblivious about the aesthetic value.

_Purush banar sajaye bere hoyeche nari_

_Purushera galai diye dari nachche bari bari_

_Bidyan jato lekhapora nari dekhle hoi sob bhera_

_Bolbo ki narir khomota nari hoye rajjer korta_

_Jemon raja temni proja saja dicche vari_|
Translation: Today’s educated women are so powerful now that they can dictate what men will do. For that men have lost identity and receive their early form i.e ‘monkey’. King and his descendents are now same and identical no more different in hierarchical stratum of society and are dethroned from their posts.

It has no appeal from any angle. Neither it has any base nor away reason. Hence, it is nothing but a nuisance to cultural minds where creation is not natural but forced.

Thus, it can be said that recently Bauls are tasteless, baseless and overall valueless. They are gradually replaced by narrowness of feeling, petty politics and professional publicity. Royalty of romanticism, mystery of mysticism, subtlety of symbolism, metaphoric meaning, playful projection of words and completeness of composition are beyond their imagination/thinking and even their reach. Too many catchy words demean the process very cheap. It is as if a ‘chaste maid in cheap side’. Along with these they are under the whirlwind of fusion, a rich composition or confluence of two different patterns or genres such as a blend between classical and modern. Successful composition of fusion is hallmark of artistic faculty. But what Bauls are doing now is not a fusion rather ‘diffusion’, a blend of English and Bengali language. On the other had the invasion of English troubles the foundation of Baul tradition. Therefore, they express their desire to go to foreign land: “Ami jai London e te batasete bese” (Translation: I am going to London by air. My body and mind don’t permit me to stay in Calcutta … Someday when I come back, I’ll also get on the metro rail. Now, I’ll also get on the metro rail and I am going London by air).

At last, it can be concluded that in an age of ‘globalization’, Bauls try to traverse the globe which is very natural. Therefore, they probe into different facets of life and delineate the themes. Success of such experimentation is not the point but they have to be extra cautious regarding their traditional and identical certainty, an identity which will uplift them
to the global people which itself will invitation to visit their lands. Therefore, at this context of folk music, amidst the tug of tussles between Bauls and non-Bauls, reality and non-reality, the real Bauls of Bengal must sustain and survive with their traditional identity, so that globalization cannot fade the global reputation and make their ethnicity frighteningly unfamiliar and alienating. Therefore, a ‘delicate balance’, a title of a novel of Rohinton Mistry, between root and foot for the purpose of progress must be maintained. Otherwise mechanical mechanization which is a part of globalization will kill the *moner manush* of man, the Baul.
Introduction of Tradition and Baul as a ‘tradition’:

The word ‘tradition’ is derived from a Latin word ‘trans’ meaning ‘across’ and ‘dare’ meaning ‘give’. According to normal notion, the word states a transmission of customs and beliefs from generation to generation, or the fact of being passed on in this way. The making is slightly different in *Cambridge dictionary*. It says “a belief, principle, or way of acting that people in a particular society or group have continued to follow for a long time, or all of these beliefs, etc. in a particular society or group”.

The concept of ‘tradition’ takes a shape in an essay of T.S. Eliot *Tradition and Individual Talent*. In that essay he defines that everything is a part of ‘tradition’. It gets an expression through the personality of the poet. But it is individuality that keeps a consciousness of separation from ‘tradition’. ‘Tradition’, according to T.S. Eliot, is sometimes confusing and contradictory for it confines the expansion of artist’s potentiality. ‘Tradition’ meaning blind adherence to superstition, age old beliefs and systems discourages the fresh air of freedom and disrupts the future.

However, the term ‘tradition’ is wider that what is initiated earlier. T.S. Eliot indicates a strong sense of ‘history’ of part through the word. ‘History’ always determines the development or degeneration. To acquire this historical sense and to locate the elements of past, one has to follow the ‘tradition’. On the other hand no clear cut method is mentioned in Indian aesthetics. ‘*Parampara*’, as Indian aesthetics would say, is a bundle of thoughts and instructions obtained from accumulated experience and handed down from generation to generation since early days of human being. In order to have the proper concept of ‘tradition’ and ‘parampara’, Indian aesthetics is must to make a mention. But the research takes an initiative to make it clear through a poem by Rabindranath Tagore *Puraskar*. Tagore says – the facts and incidents of life will come and go. It is a continuous cycle which itself will fill
the minds of new generations with its best. Battles which are still fought are unable to usher any solution. But the battle between Kauravas and Pandavas has become a theme of past and narrates a story of ‘tradition’ the nation. Consequently, any curiosity in Indian nation, one is naturally required to take into account of profundity for thoughts presented in Vedas, the Upanishads and the Classics.

Jeane openshaw defines Baul as “the name of a class, group of people or ‘sampraday’ (tradition)”. Automatically the obvious question is how these common people came to be known as Baul so far as the English connotation i.e ‘tradition’ continues. To be very fair and frank there is no specific date and year neither mentioned nor noted in the entire history of Baul ‘tradition’. From the time immemorial there is a preconceived notion that Baul can never be categorized as ‘gentry’. To put it in a simple way, the research can say that so called educated and elite people cannot match with the Bauls. Hence, they never intend to be Bauls at any cost. But what research looks forward is that so called ‘bhadraok’ (educated people or so called cultured people of the Bengal) always prefer to be ‘tantrik’, an activity that requires sense of elegance and extravagance rather than becoming a music minstrel, Bauls. This high estimation of so called ‘bhadralok’ regarding their social status, education, position and possession thwarts them (the Bauls) at the corner of the society far away from neighbourhood places which is beyond their notice. The research thinks that this social segregation rather lack of direct attachment with the living society is one of the paramount reasons of having no document with them and about them as well simply because neither educated people took interest in them or felt the importance to translate those trash materials into pen and paper nor they motivated themselves to jolt down the content or understand the value of their own.

In the beginning, it is stated that scarcity of books or texts leads the readers or researchers to look back into the perceptions of Bauls. Such consideration can chalk out both the traditions; traditional aspects of Bauls and tradition outgoing. Earlier they are considered
as the group of people devoted to Vaishnavite religion. For the justification one needs to probe into Bhakti Movement of Bengal. In Hunter’s *Satisfied Account of Bengal* Bauls are classified as Hindus apart from being identified as ‘bhairagi’, a renounce (Detachment from life) and ‘vaishnav’, follower of Vaishnavite religion. Risley opined a different view of having separated from the body of Vishnavite rituals. He further informed:

Bearing in mind the limitations of British imperial sources, I now propose to turn to the material itself. To begin with the earliest relevant source, Bauls are mentioned only twice in the entire series of Hunter’s Statistical Account of Bengal, published from 1875 CE. In both cases, they are classified as Hindus, but apart from being identified as bhairagi in one case, and baishnava but not bhairagi in the other, nothing more is said of them.

Risley further opined:

Baolas are separated from the main body of Vaishnavas. They comprise a number of ‘disreputable mendicant orders’ and recruit mainly from the lower castes. Flesh and alcohol are forbidden but fish is eaten; hemp is smoked; they never shave or cut their hair and filthiness of a person ranks as a virtue among them. They are believed to be grossly immoral, he maintains, and are held in very low estimation by respectable Hindus. They comprise a number of ‘disreputable mendicant orders’ and recruit many mainly from the lower castes. Flesh and alcohol are forbidden but fish is eaten; hemp is smoked; they ‘never shave and cut their hair and filthiness of the person ranks as a virtue among them’. They are believed to be grossly immoral, he maintains, and are ‘held in very low estimation by respectable Hindus’. (Risley, p. 347)

Though some conceptions are rooted on assumptions, it definitely engenders and endangers the concept of Baul regarding its ‘sampraday’ (tradition with sect, of name with tradition).

In Bengali literature, Akshyay Dutta first initiated the concept of Baul, ‘aul’, ‘sahaja’, ‘kartabajha’ as a ‘sampraday’ in his monumental work *Bharat Bishayay Upasak* (in Bengali) translated as *Religious Traditions of India*. Exclusively he talks about thirty ‘sampraday’ under the rubrics ‘branches of chaitanya sampraday’. Here at this juncture it creates a clash
with another literary giant on this track, Upendranath Bandopadhyay. He straightway negates the concept of ‘sampraday’. Jeanne Openshaw writes:

Dutta is criticized by Bhattacharya for ignoring the great traditions (sampraday) of Fakirs of East and West Bengal, an omission shared to an overwhelming extent by the sources in English cited, and one inevitably entailed by Dutta’s inclusion of Bauls and so forth offshoots of the Chaitanya Sampraday. Bhattacharya’s contention is that Dutta was blindly followed on these matters by subsequent authors. (p. 35).

However, there are considerable amount of confusion between ‘fakir’ and ‘Baul’ among Muslim thinkers rather critics and gentry people of West Bengal. Jeane Openshaw comments:

The assumption of an exclusively Hindu identity for Baul should be seen in the context of developments within Bengali Muslim society from the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In association with the rise of a series of Islamic reform movements, a stream of hostile tracts was unleashed against the perceived heterodoxy of Muslims called ‘Fakir’ or ‘Baul’. Such tracts, generally written by Islamic scholars and clerics, include ‘fake fakirs’ (Bhanda fakir) and mandate for the destruction of Bauls (Baul Dhanvsa phatoa) (Ray, p. 22-23).

One crucial point is Lalon himself, the ‘guru’, the founder and propagator of Baul tradition who never identifies himself as ‘Baul’. He was one and only Lalon Fokir. Nevertheless the conception creates a spark and unveils a spectacular research within Shaktipada Jha:

Moreover, as far as I know, Lalaon, who came to epitomize the traditional Baul, and who was also a vilified by reformist Islamic elements, never called himself Baul, nor was so called by his contemporaries. In his songs, he usually ‘signs’ himself Fakir Lalon and refers to his guru Siraj as Sai or darbes (‘Darvish’). (Jha, p.153).

In the very beginning, especially in introductory part of Baul, the research points out the connotation of the word based on one of the oldest texts of Bengali literature. At the end of 16th century the word got mentioned seven times in the primary text of Vaishnav Sahitya, Shrikrishna Chaityacharitamrta. Here the book positively approves the attachment of Baul
with Vaishnav cults. One of the traditions of Vaishnav Padas (Poems) is ‘vanita’ (mention of the name of the writer in the last line of the poem). Later on quite surprisingly in the compositions of Bauls, it has become a norm to authenticate their writing with devotion. Lalon Fakir has extensively used it. After that *Gitgovindam*, another voluminous book by Jaydeva inspired the concept of Bauls so far as the language is concerned. It is worth pointing out that all these poems in *Gitgovindam* are a form of celebration conferring Lord Krishna who is also the ideal of the Baul sect. They are devotees of Lord Krishna and Maa Kali. Even Chaitanya Mahapравu, to add to the curiosity in the minds of the readers, the research can say is often called ‘Maha Baul’ in the sense ‘gone mad’ especially when he lost himself in the vortex of Krishna devotion in the form of ‘Bhakti’ movement. S. B. Dasgupta avers:

The Caryapadas (or Carya Songs) and the Dohas (distichs), written by the ‘siddhas’ (perfect ones) between the 18th century and 19th century CE, are generally considered to belong to the tantric Buddhist school of thought and literature known as Sahajiya or Sahajiyana (p. 13) ... The term ‘sahaj’, from which these levels derive, literally means ‘being born together with’, and by extension ‘congenital, innate, hereditary, original, and natural’ (p. 61-62).

He further informs:

In modern Bengali, sahaj(a) means ‘easy’, ‘simple’, and ‘plain’. Sahaja constitutes an ontological as well as psychological category, and emphasis is placed on realization rather than ritual or scholarship. Indeed formalism and convention of any kind, lay or religious, Hindu and Buddhist, seems to have rejected. (Dasgupta, 53-54).

Charyapadas and some songs of Bauls are very similar in all respects particularly when the concept of ‘sahaj’ is hinted at. After that in the hand of Lalon, Baul tradition gets fired up and through Tagore it gets a new dimension.
Introduction of ‘Comparative Literature’:

The term ‘comparative literature’ is derived from a French term ‘Litteraturee comparee’. Various contradictory perspectives gave birth to such theory as opined by Susan Bassnett. The view simply suggests that the scholars who travelled different routes of literature could not meet a definite point. Therefore, they chose the paths of literary comparison through the evolution of fresh and more developed theories.

‘Comparative literature as a branch of literary study relates or correlates between two or more literary texts. Marious Francois Guyard’s book *La Litterature Comparee* defines that ‘comparative literature is a branch of literary history, for it tackles the international spiritual affinities’. Later on comparative study is enriched by the colour of ‘etudes binaries’ (binary studies). Here is a contradiction, when the research takes about binary studies it excludes ‘anonymous’, ‘folkloric’ and ‘collective works’, even though it is well known and accepted from the periphery of comparative literature for being impersonal.

However, Tieghem keeps a sharp distinction between what the readers call ‘general literature’ and ‘comparative literature’. By ‘general literature’ he means a text having mutual relationship rather reciprocal relation or congruency with other texts while ‘comparative literature’ means the study of two entities: two books or writers, two groups of books or writers, or two complete literatures. Nevertheless, the definition is not free from counter arguments. Critics like Remax insinuates ‘general’ and ‘comparative’ literature fall into the same category; they are similar in meaning and therefore inseparable. In 20th century the rise of other theories turned the critics from their directness to the theory. Consequently, French theorists confined themselves with the outside feature of the theory ignoring the internal aspects of the texts and other corners or loopholes. Today’s ‘comparative literature’ cannot stand alone. It invariably includes ‘theory of influence’ and ‘theory of reception’, which
again include ‘theory of intertextuality’, the concept of ‘imitation’ and ‘borrowing’, ‘theory of parallelism’ and subsequent theory; the theory of ‘anxiety of influence’.

**The concept of ‘Influence’:**

The concept of influence is definitely a part of French school of comparative study. The concept ensues a wide scope of interpretation among the critics. But simply the concept says a conscious and unconscious movement of an idea, theme, an image, a literary tradition and even a particular cultural concept in literary texts. The process is unending dividing it into distinct types of influence-

a) **Literary and non literary ‘influence’**: 

The concept of literary ‘influence’ seems to trace the hidden mutual relation between two or more than two literary texts. It can be regarded as the ‘touchstone’ of literary studies. G.B. Shaw’s *Pygmalion* and Tawfiq’s *Al-Hakeem* are perfect examples of literary ‘influence’. While a comparative study between Rifaat’s *Al-Jahtawi* and French culture is based on the principle of ‘non-literary’ influence.

b) **Direct and indirect ‘influence’**: 

A direct influence is marked when there is an actual contact between writers beyond culture, language and space. To be more specific, a literary text would not have existed before any connection with the ‘original’ text or the writer himself or herself. It is definitely a tough task to identify such direct reflection without any reference of the writer. Shakespeare is the prime example for that. His texts are largely based on history and folktales. But it is his genuine creativity rather the genius which remoulded and reshaped those into new forms. Therefore, it would be a risky decision to render it as direct ‘influence’ but better to say that it clearly pertains to the theory of direct ‘influence’.
On the other hand in end number of cases, the concept of ‘influence’ is very submissive or subdued due to number of reasons. One prominent reason might be language. But here mediators could be the popularity of the text / person, various creative and critical discussions of the same on various periodicals and journals, translation or through seminars. Such kind of ‘influence’ can be termed as indirect. Prime example is Rabindranath Tagore and Lalon Fakir, though language is same but it was all together a different country and different time as well. Mine de Staet’s *D’Allemagne* (1810 published in Britain in 1813) is one such example.

c) Positive and passive ‘influence’:

When a foreign literary text is helping the writer create successful work, it is considered as positive ‘influence’. Accordingly some foreign works may have a passive influence upon a national writer when s/he feels to write a book in terms of a reaction or reflection or criticism. Examples are Daniel’s *Cleopatra* (1606), William Shakespeare’s Antony and Cleopatra (1606), La Chapelle’s *La Mort de Cleopatre* (1680), Asommet’s *Cleopatra* (1824), Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra* (1912) etc.

d) Translation and False ‘Influence’:

Translation can also be regarded as a part of ‘influence’ study. Due to a strong impulse, the writer translates the original text beyond the limits of culture, language and space. Which is why the writers sometime fail to bestow a proper shape may be consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, it results in a different problem called as false ‘influence’. Here readers are neither getting the taste of original text nor the flavour of a new one. Charles Pierre Baudlaire’s translation of Poe’s stories into French and several other English translations are clear examples. Plainly it can concluded by saying that false ‘influence’ can be found when a writer is influenced by a foreign ext and is treated with a flavour of own cultural context.
‘Influence’ study is typically different because of its nuances. To talk about ‘influence’ one must know/acknowledge the concept of ‘reception’. Further discussion/digging desperately directs to the concept of ‘borrowing’ and ‘imitation’. Here the research tries to highlight some basic concepts on these.

**e) The concept of ‘Reception’:**

Without ‘reception’, the concept of ‘influence’ is impossible. On the other way it is particularly ‘reception’ which drags the writer to the level of ‘influence’. Therefore, according to the research, there is no solid demarcation between these two rather two different levels/stages of acceptance where one leads to the other and ‘influence’ on the other rolls the same to the another pursuing them to write a new text. Russian scholar Zhirmunsky commented on its nature. He says the process of ‘reception’ is not coincidental or mechanical but rather systematic, as it takes place only when the foreign work brings in cultural and ideological modes that accord with or help evolve those of nation.

**f) The concept or ‘Borrowing’ and ‘Imitation’:**

Borrowing is a ramification of ‘imitation’ in a larger sense. It ranges from the refashioning of the best parts of a foreign work in a way that fits well the national public taste to the adaptation of a particular style and technique. Pushkin’s adaptation of Byron’s elegy or Pound’s collection of the Russian old models of poetry is the perfect example of ‘borrowing’.

‘There is an ancient quarrel between philosophy and poetry’ declares Plato, the most celebrated of the ancient philosophers to have committed himself to paper, at the end of Book 10 of *The Republic*. And such a judgement of the relation between philosophy and art of an inherent antagonism on the basis of imitation is only the culmination, the necessary consummation of a cogent elucidation of the unbridgeable hiatus between the two in his
'Theory of Ideas’ presented within the larger form of a theory of art in the same book. Plato who is otherwise famous for his non-aesthetic approach to literature, usually banishes literature from his ideal ‘Republic’, his utopian dreamland, because of philosophical, religious, moral and practical reasons because they water and feed the passions and desires of men. But here, in his theory of art the philosopher in him too contributes to the strictures against poetry. But in the process emanates a brilliant theory of ‘mimesis’ which is original for it reveals the fundamental truth that all art is, at the core, imitation. Though Democritus had to a certain extent anticipated the concept of ‘mimesis’ in his reference to singing as an imitation of birds. ‘Theory of Ideas’ is the first instant where one can grasp ‘mimesis’ as a critical term.

The theory of Ideas or Forms speaks of one ideal single form on one hand and of the many imperfect copies of the perfect original. The two analogies of the prisoners in the cave and that of Divided Line in Book 5 of *The Republic* proving greater illumination to this theory. The prisoners in the cave are at first chained to face the back wall where all they can see are shadows cast by a fire which is behind them. The fire, symbolic of the sun and of reality, is invisible and even inapprehensible to the prisoners. Similarly the Divided Line has four ascending phases of knowledge of which the bottom (‘eikasia’or sensory apprehension) and the one above that (‘pistis’ or faith), are collectively known as ‘doxa’or mere opinion accessible to ordinary humanity. The two higher divisions- ‘dianoia’or discursive understanding and ‘neosis’or intuitive knowledge of permanent things- are together termed ‘episteme’ or knowledge, and are beyond common human beings. Poetry is related to these theories because of the fact that it deals with the apparent world of manifold forms rather than the real world of single form. It deals with the prisoners and can only provide ‘doxa’ or mere opinion, not true knowledge.
The subject of ‘influence’ is so subjective that it is divided into two groups of thinkers; the French group of theorists and American school of theorists. The founder of American school Henry Remarks opines that ‘comparative literature’ should not be regarded as a discipline on its own but rather a connecting link between subjects and ‘subjects areas’ thus he makes the comparison beyond any limit or shortcoming. At once it can include music, painting, philosophy, history, geography, physics, social science and so on. One way he makes it as a form of the notion of ‘nationalism’. Therefore, ‘depolarization’ of comparative study makes American school district from the French group of thinkers and it is mainly divided into two fundamental theories:

a) **The ‘Parallelism’ theory:**

Ihab Hassan, an Egyptian born American scholar, is the founder of ‘parallelism’ theory. He opposed the ‘comparative literary’ study based on the notion of ‘influence’. He says harmony is at the root of all creation in general and in human being in particular. Undoubtedly the concept of ‘parallelism’ focuses on the semblance between the literatures of different people who have evolved in the same way. He exemplified the texts generated during the troublesome period of Feudal system. Beyond that the critics try to distil the common features between literatures and writers with a specific, pattern. In the second phase he has shown the reaction through texts against the dominant restrictive rules of society, nature and classicism. For example he says – there would be no room for Goethe’s story *Die Leiden des Jungen Werthers* or Fitzgerald’s translation of *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* as examples in foreign countries if people were not prepared (mentally or culturally) for absorbing all these works’ ideas, philosophies and concepts.
b) **Theory of ‘Intertextuality’**: 

The term ‘intertextuality’ is originally coined and systematically introduced into literary theory by Julia Kristeva in her seminal book *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980). As Kristeva observed in her chapter entitled ‘Word, Dialogue and Novel’:

... any text is constructed as a mosaic of a quotation; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of ‘intertextuality’ replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double. Similarly in another chapter entitled ‘The Bounded Text’, she describes a text as a ‘permutation of texts’, an ‘intertextuality’ in the space of a given text, several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another’. Significantly enough, Kristeva’s notion of ‘intertextuality’ strikes amazing resemblances with Roland Barthes’ concept of a text “as a multidimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash” and “a tissue of questions drawn from the innumerable centres of culture” (The Death of the Author, 1968).

c) **The theory of ‘Anxiety of Influence’**: 

The term ‘Anxiety of Influence’ was popularized in literary criticism along with the publication of Harold Bloom’s famous book bearing the same title published in 1973. A precursor of Bloom’s theory was Walter Jacobson Bates *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* (1970) which relates the struggle confronted by poets since the Restoration to overcome the overwhelming fear that the influence of the predecessors could have exhausted the possibilities of writing of one’s original work.

Following in the same line Bloom contents that a letter or ‘belated’ poet is always haunted by the overwhelming influence of his ‘precursor’ or father poet. Consequently, it
leads to a kind of oedipal relationship in that the belated poet unconsciously safeguards his sense of autonomy and priority and tries to deviate from his father poet by restoring to the kind of distortion. Paradoxically it is this distortion and deviation that betray that ‘anxiety of influence’. This process is related more to interpretation and Reader Response theory than to textual criticism as such.

At the end it can assessed that soul is excessively an outside entity for Tagore while it is intensively inclusive for Bauls. For Tagore, soul appears through different forms, shades and identities – sometimes father, mother, (guardians), master, supreme power and so on. But for Bauls he is close to their hearts limp with at here in their huts. The research can conclude by saying that if soul is friend for Bauls, he is really a ‘guide’ and 'philosopher' from the academic perceptive where there is always a command on their students.
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