
© *Kamla-Raj* 2004
(2004)

PRINT: ISSN 0971-8923 ONLINE: 2456-6756

J. Soc. Sci., 8(2): 93-104

DOI: 10.31901/24566756.2004/08.02.03

The Oral Epics of the Women of the Dandakaranya Plateau: A Preliminary Mapping

Chris A. Gregory

*School of Archaeology and Anthropology, Faculty of Arts, Australian National
University, Canberra ACT 0200, Australia
E-mail: Chris.Gregory@anu.edu.au*

KEYWORDS Oral epics; gender; Dandakaranya plateau; middle India; subaltern thought

ABSTRACT Anthropological studies of the oral epics of India are still in their infancy. Existing studies show that men are the principal singers. The songs they sing about reflect male concerns about wars and conquest; the rituals they perform whilst singing them tend to have death as a central theme. A contrary tradition, hitherto unreported, exists among the women singers of the Dandakaranya plateau of middle India who sing about birth, food production, and domestic violence. A preliminary mapping of these epics shows how they are grounded in the ecology of the Dandakaranya plateau and in the sociology of the patriarchal household. We can learn much about subaltern thought from these epics but before the theoretical implications of them can be developed much more primary research needs to be done, especially in the Nowrangpur and Koraput Districts of Orissa.

[Home](#)

[Back](#)
