

PERFORMING REMEMBRANCE: THE HATTEE TRIBE'S MAUN FOLKLORE AS RESISTANCE TO MODERNIZATION AND STATE CONTROL

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores how the Hattee tribe's folklore, particularly those themed-on Maun, a traditional freshwater fishing practice, serves as a form of cultural resistance and preservation. The Hattee tribe, residing in the trans-Giri region of district Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh, once gathered across villages for Maun—a long-distance journey culminating in a competitive fishing event that fostered unity and a connection to the land. However, the division of the tribe due to state boundaries between Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, combined with the introduction of State control and modern infrastructural developments such as roads, disrupted this practice and fragmented the community. Despite the physical loss of Maun, its legacy lives on through performative storytelling. This folklore, celebrated with indigenous music, singing and dancing, continues to be performed in both the divided parts of the tribe complete with the nuances of orality. The locations mentioned in the folklore, now situated on both sides of the boundary, remind newer generations of their ancestral connection to the once-shared paths. Through these celebrated performances of remembrance, the Hattee tribe resists the power structures that divided them, using performing arts as a tool to resist erasure and fragmentation while reimagining a community that transcends geographical boundaries and other barriers. This paper examines how the performance of this folklore not only commemorates Maun but also acts as a form of resistance, keeping the memory of unity of the tribe alive. It situates the folklore within the broader context of performing arts as sites of resistance, demonstrating how the storytelling of Hattee tribe counters State control and modernization. The paper emphasizes the importance of indigenous narratives in fostering resilience and ensuring the cultural survival of marginalized traditions in a rapidly changing world.

Keywords: Hattee tribe, trans-Giri region, folklore, Maun, performing arts, cultural preservation, resistance, state boundaries, State control, resilience.

Introduction

The Hattee tribe, residing in the trans-Giri region of district Sirmaur of Himachal Pradesh and Jaunsar-Bawar region of Uttarakhand, represents a rich cultural heritage that is increasingly under threat due to modernization and state control. Their oral tradition, particularly practiced in the Sirmauri-Tankari dialect, faces decline as younger generations struggle to comprehend its vocabulary. This cultural endangerment is exacerbated by significant changes in regional geography and the imposition of state control, which disrupt traditional practices and community cohesion.

Even after about 180 years of Jaunsar-Bawar's separation from Sirmaur, formation of Himachal Pradesh state in 1971 and carving out of Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh in 2000, the tribe still maintains uniformity through trans-Tauns marriages and other relations. This uniformity of culture is conspicuous in the Haruls (folklore) that are sung in the celebrations of trans-Giri Sirmaur of Himachal Pradesh but have names of villages which now fall in the trans-Tauns Jaunsar-Bawar region in the state of Uttarakhand. The performance of *Maun* folklore serves as a vital cultural artifact that not only commemorates this lost tradition but also functions as a form of resistance against these modern challenges.

The *Maun* fair, also known as *Mela Mon*, has its origins steeped in historical and mythological narratives that reflect the identity and values of the tribe. It is primarily a gathering for young men from the Khash (Rajput) community, marking their transition into adulthood. Historically, this fair has served as a demonstration of strength among rival clans, with its roots tracing back to ancient times when various tribes inhabited the region, often harbouring enmity towards one another. The fair evolved to symbolize power and unity among the Khash community while also reflecting deeper cultural narratives.

In addition to these cultural practices, the social structure of the Hattee tribe plays a significant role in sustaining their identity and traditions. Elders within the community are highly respected and serve as custodians of knowledge, passing down stories, customs, and rituals to younger members. This mentorship is crucial, as it not only helps preserve the dialect and oral traditions but also fosters a sense of belonging and continuity among the youth. Community gatherings, such as festivals and religious ceremonies, provide opportunities for the transmission of cultural values and reinforce the importance of unity and collective identity. Through these interactions, the tribe actively resists the forces of modernization, ensuring that their unique heritage remains vibrant and relevant. Such communal efforts highlight the tribe's determination to adapt while staying true to their roots, creating a dynamic interplay between tradition and contemporary life.

Mela Mon: Origin and History

The *Mela Mon* fair has a complex history intertwined with the mythology of the Pandavas from Hindu epics. It is said that a shrine in Hanol was constructed by Bhima of the Pandavas, featuring 32 massive stones forming 32 angles, with a heavy slab called Vajra Shila resting atop it—an emblem of strength. This mythological context enriches the significance of the fair as it embodies both physical prowess and spiritual heritage.

The origins of the *Maun* fair, also known as *Mela Mon*, are intertwined with the ancient mythology of local deities Mahasu and Shirgul, whose stories are deeply embedded in the cultural landscape of the Hattee tribe. According to local myths, the fair's origins date back to the defeat of Kaliyar, a demon who terrorized the people until he was slain by warriors sent by the god Mahasu. Following this victory, Mahasu initiated the *Maun* gathering as a communal celebration, inviting people from far and wide to demonstrate their strength and resilience along the banks of the Tons River.

Similarly, the god Shirgul is said to have defended the tribe's territory against another demon, Kirmir, whose colossal battles with the local deities led to the establishment of sacred places and natural landmarks throughout the region. Shirgul's confrontation with Kirmir led to the demon's defeat at Atahal, marking the spot as a gathering place for tribal festivities. Each year, as the Hattee people celebrate *Maun*, they honour the courage and protective spirit of Shirgul, recalling the mythic struggle and their own heritage of resilience.

These mythological narratives underscore the importance of *Maun* as a fair that transcends its modern-day form as a competition; it serves as a cultural enactment of the Hattee tribe's foundational values of bravery, unity and loyalty to one another. The fair's rituals—carrying swords, battling over the retrieval of a symbolic herb called Prickly-Ash and gathering at riversides—echo the ancient stories of Mahasu and Shirgul's victories and act as a reminder of the ancestral strength of the tribe. Through *Maun*, the Hattee people honour their gods while reaffirming their identity, connecting present generations with the mythic past and ensuring that these traditions persist despite modern challenges.

Over time, this ritual evolved into a display of physical prowess, symbolizing the ongoing commitment of the tribe to strength and unity in the face of challenges. Participants dressed minimally and carried weapons, signifying readiness for conflict. Death or injury during these displays was not frowned upon; rather, it led to blood feuds, illustrating the high stakes involved in these cultural practices. The fair not only celebrated communal ties but also transformed into a venue for settling scores between rival clans.

Before the fair, challengers announced vendettas or disputes, daring rivals to settle them during the event. On the day of the fair, both clans gathered dressed in minimal attire, ready to demonstrate their might. The climax occurs when one group attempts to seize an herbal mixture known as prickly ash, hidden at various challenging riverside locations. The successful retrieval and immersion of prickly ash in water would declare victory, as its effect would intoxicate nearby fish, facilitating easy catches in the act of fishing where the festival culminated. This ritual emphasizes strength and reinforces communal bonds through shared experiences and celebrations following the competition.

The communal aspect of the *Mela Mon* fair served not only to display physical prowess but also to strengthen social bonds among participants and spectators alike. As clans gathered to witness these contests, a sense of shared

identity emerged, reinforcing traditional values and collective memory. The narratives surrounding the fair, deeply rooted in the mythology of the Pandavas, serve as a backdrop that enriched the experience for all involved. This collective engagement fostered a spirit of camaraderie, ensuring that the fair remained a vital expression of cultural heritage that transcended individual rivalries. Through these interactions, the Mela Mon fair became a reaffirmation of the community's identity.

Due to administrative control resulting from the establishment of state boundaries and various socio-political factors, the practice of Maun has ended. The imposition of state governance has disrupted the natural flow of cultural practices that once thrived in the region, leading to a gradual loss of the vibrant community interactions that characterized the Maun tradition. As a consequence, the rituals associated with Maun are no longer actively performed; instead, they are now primarily remembered and conveyed through the folklore performances of the Haruls. In these performances, the stories and significance of Maun are recounted, preserving its memory and meaning for future generations. While the actual practice has faded, the narrative remnants of Maun continue to serve as a vital link to the cultural past of the tribe, emphasizing the enduring importance of storytelling in maintaining communal identity amid changing circumstances.

Maun was also celebrated in Kashmir, Kinnaur, and other places in ancient times. Some people believe the word "Maun" originated from the Mon tribe, an ancient group. Eventually, the fair began to be held at riverbanks in other locations. The main purpose became catching fish and displaying strength (Sharma).

Summary of *Haja-Doshou* Folklore

One of the *Maun* folklore titled "Harul Haja-Doshou," recounts the preparations and execution of the Hattee tribe's traditional freshwater fishing competition known as *Maun*. It begins with the youth of Doshou village rallying to organize the event, led by village figures like Laal Singh and Bhup Singh. Plans are made with excitement and enthusiasm, with various villages contributing materials such as gunpowder and prickly ash, essential for the fishing competition.

The folklore captures a sense of community as multiple villages come together to prepare for *Maun*, which includes building a rope bridge and preparing musical instruments like *Dhols* and *Nagadas*. On an auspicious day, villagers set off with music and drumming through valleys and gorges, awaiting participation from other villages such as Haja.

However, tensions arise when *Maun* reaches Kwanu village, whose villagers are late to join. The youth of Doshou mock Kwanu in a song, causing village head Bhup Singh to become enraged. The vulgarity of the song is part of the procession and is called "Jheeru" in the Sirmauri-Tankari dialect. In a fit of anger, he cuts down the rope bridge across the Tons River, disrupting participants' journey. The folklore ends with half the group managing to swim across while others return home empty-handed; Kwanu's chief laughs at this outcome because unity is one of the highest regarded virtues for the people of this community and the display of its lack in the Doshou village was not only deplorable but a lesson for the audience of the folklore.

This folklore vividly illustrates *Maun's* cultural significance as a unifying force across Hattee villages before state boundaries disrupted their way of life. The narrative of "Harul Haja-Doshou" also serves as a poignant reminder of the cultural dynamics at play within the Hattee tribe, highlighting how external factors such as state boundaries have influenced interpersonal relationships and communal identity. The tensions between the Doshou and Kwanu villages not only reveal underlying rivalries but also underscore the importance of unity and collective spirit that the Maun competition traditionally fostered. Despite the disruptions caused by modern influences, the essence of Maun as a celebration of shared identity and cultural heritage endures through these narratives, providing a critical lens through which to examine the historical and contemporary struggles of the tribe.

Merging Perspectives on *Maun* Folklore

The performance of *Maun* folklore can be examined through phenomenology and Victor Turner's concept of rituals shaping identity: "Rituals are not just performances; they are the very fabric of our being" (Turner 34). This perspective helps us understand how rituals define identity amidst challenges posed by state control. In relation to

Maun, this ritualistic storytelling reinforces communal identity by allowing participants to engage deeply with their heritage. The fair itself required extensive collaboration, with each village contributing uniquely to the event's success—demonstrating how *Maun* was a collective effort that tied the community together. Villagers from Doshou, for example, relied on neighbouring villages for essential items like prickly ash, which was planted and harvested as a communal task. Gunpowder, another essential resource, was gathered collectively, with villagers ensuring enough for the procession through coordinated contributions. The construction of the rope bridge from scratch is another powerful moment in the folklore, illustrating the commitment and labour shared among the villages to ensure a safe passage.

Each of these tasks—whether planting prickly ash, arranging gunpowder, or constructing the bridge—was distributed among different villages, creating a network of interdependence. By relying on each other for these essential elements, each village became an integral part of the larger whole, transforming the *Maun* fair into a ritual that celebrated unity through shared effort. This communal approach to preparations for *Maun* not only facilitated the event itself but also deepened each village's sense of belonging within the Hattee tribe. The collective experience enriched each participant's understanding of their shared heritage, embedding within them the idea that their individual identities are inseparably linked to the larger community. In this way, the *Maun* fair served not just as a cultural event but as a living reinforcement of communal bonds and collective identity.

Émile Durkheim's concept of collective consciousness underscores how rituals like *Maun* strengthen social bonds within Hattee society: “The collective consciousness is not merely a reflection of individual beliefs; it shapes them” (Durkheim 85). As villagers gather for preparation, the youth, joining in alongside their elders, are imbued with the collective consciousness of the tribe through their active participation. Tasks such as gathering prickly ash, assembling gunpowder and building the rope bridge become more than mere preparations—they are acts of communal engagement that instil a shared historical memory and reinforce traditional values. The *Maun* fair also revives old rivalries, with younger participants taking up the same feuds that their ancestors once held, creating continuity within the community's narratives. This passing down of narratives and rivalries allows the youth to experience and internalize the Hattee tribe's values and history, deepening their connection to the collective memory of the tribe.

Analysing *Maun* folklore through a postcolonial lens reveals how indigenous communities resist external power impositions. Edward Said notes that “cultural practices become sites of resistance against colonial narratives” (Said 21). By performing this folklore, the Hattee tribe asserts cultural sovereignty despite the political fragmentation it has endured. After nearly 180 years of Jaunsar-Bawar's separation from Sirmaur, the formation of Himachal Pradesh as a state in 1971 and the carving out of Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh in 2000, the Hattee tribe has maintained continuity and uniformity through trans-Tauns marriages, inter-village relations and most importantly, the performance of *Maun* folklore. This musical narrative, performed in villages within the Sirmaur district of Himachal Pradesh, recounts the practice of *Maun* with references to villages and figures—such as Bhup Singh—that now fall within Uttarakhand. Even though the physical practice of *Maun* has ceased, its memory lives on through this performance, serving as a cultural act of resistance. The folklore challenges the “imposed amnesia” of administrative borders that neglect the unified past and history of the tribe. By preserving and performing these narratives, the Hattee people not only remember the geographic and personal markers of their collective identity but actively resist state-imposed separations. The performance becomes a powerful reminder of the continuity of the tribe, defying efforts to erase the names and memories that connect the Hattee across the Tauns River and state lines, thereby maintaining a sense of unity amidst political division.

The tension between traditional values and modern influences is evident in youth disregard for established norms during events like *Maun*. Eric Hobsbawm argues that “tradition must be understood as an active process shaped by contemporary realities” (Hobsbawm 12). This reflects societal negotiations regarding cultural preservation amid modernization pressures.

From a subaltern studies perspective, *Maun* folklore represents the voice of a marginalized group resisting erasure by dominant political structures. Gayatri Spivak asserts that “subaltern groups use cultural practices as tools for

reclaiming their narratives” (Spivak 308). In the case of the Hattee tribe, *Maun* serves as a way to reclaim and assert their history and traditions, particularly in the face of boundaries that would otherwise render their story invisible. Through the performance of *Maun* folklore, the Hattee tribe keeps alive the legacy of their shared past, transmitting stories, values, and memories that might otherwise be lost to the mechanisms of state control and modernizing influences. This storytelling allows the Hattee people to publicly affirm their heritage, ensuring that their story, shaped by unity and communal resilience, endures across generations.

The *Maun* folklore transcends geographic boundaries that currently divide Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Despite these political lines, Hattee people on both sides maintain this cultural tradition with enduring reverence and passion. This unity across state boundaries highlights how shared memories associated with sites continue to inspire both communities. By performing *Maun* with such vibrancy, the Hattee communities maintain a bond that defies physical separation. Such performances embody resistance against divisive impacts imposed by governance structures while revitalizing memories from a unified past.

As urbanization encroaches upon traditional lifestyles—where practice of *Maun* has come to an end—the need for such performances becomes even more critical for community survival. The spirit of *Maun* endures despite government administration largely extinguishing its active practice; both groups perform this folklore vigorously while preserving its original sentiment centred around community solidarity.

Through these celebrations and recounting through the *Harul* folklore performances, Hattee people embody resistance against state control's divisive impacts while reinforcing collective identity across political boundaries—a testament to their resilience amid contemporary challenges faced today.

The enduring performance of *Maun* folklore within the Hattee community underscores how these rituals act as a form of cultural memory, embedding stories of unity, resilience and shared struggle into the communal psyche. The storytelling not only preserves the specific details of *Maun*'s practices but also conveys a powerful reminder of collective values that transcend current socio-political boundaries. This ritualized memory serves as a social framework, anchoring the community in its past and shaping the identity and continuity of the Hattee tribe despite external pressures. As each generation participates in or witnesses these performances, they reestablish a connection to the ancestral experiences of the Hattee people. Through these communal re-enactments, *Maun*'s folklore becomes a mode of identity preservation that defies the limitations imposed by modern administrative borders, fostering a sense of belonging that spans beyond the geographical divides between Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand. In this way, the Hattee tribe not only resists cultural erosion but also actively fortifies its unique heritage, ensuring its relevance within an ever-changing social landscape.

Youth participation plays an essential role in preserving traditional values within the Hattee tribe, as they are tasked with carrying forth customs. The *Maun*, historically exclusive to young men transitioning into adulthood, has broader implications regarding gender roles in Hattee culture. Young men are expected to uphold values learned through their involvement in these rituals, ensuring continuity and cohesion within the community. As younger members engage actively in these performances, they internalize lessons about unity and respect, essential for maintaining tribal identity in contemporary society. Thus, the *Maun* transcends competition, serving as a didactic tool that reinforces adherence to traditions while allowing room for growth and adaptation.

Additionally, *Maun Harul* bridges generational gaps by enabling older members to impart wisdom through storytelling traditions embedded within the performances. This significance extends beyond entertainment; it embodies stories passed down through generations, fostering a sense of belonging within the cultural heritage. The *Maun* serves as a “ritual of remembrance,” linking repetitive storytelling to the preservation of collective memory amid geopolitical divides. By embodying purposeful acts that reaffirm shared identity, *Maun* rituals reflect a sense of *communitas*, reclaiming heritage and resisting the fragmentation imposed by state boundaries between Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. Each gathering symbolizes a pilgrimage of storytelling, reviving memories of cultural cohesion that transcend geographical divisions.

The journey undertaken during *Maun* can be analysed using Victor Turner's concepts liminality *communitas*: "Liminality creates *communitas*...among participants during rituals" (Turner 95). Shared experiences foster deep social solidarity among participants engaged within these communal gatherings celebrating heritage together. In relation to folklore performance, audience experiences transformation through collective engagement with the storytelling, reinforcing bonds while navigating challenges posed by modernity affecting tribal life today.

Cultural relativism allows us to appreciate the Hattee tribe's values—unity and respect—as integral components of their worldview. Clifford Geertz emphasizes that "understanding cultures requires us to see them on our own terms rather than through an external lens" (Geertz 10). This reinforces the significance of their cultural context, expressed through events like *Mela Mon*, where local traditions shape identities fostered over generations despite the pressures of a changing environment today.

While it is essential to acknowledge the caste-exclusionary connotations surrounding the *Maun* ritual, which permits only Rajput-born male members to participate, this aspect should not overshadow the broader cultural framework within which these practices exist. Dismissing the entire way of life of the Hattee tribe based on this exclusion would be reductive and fail to recognize the rich tapestry of their traditions and beliefs. Their rituals serve as a means of maintaining community cohesion, shared identity and a connection to their history, even amid contemporary challenges. Understanding these practices in their cultural context allows for a more nuanced appreciation of the Hattee tribe, highlighting that their values, despite certain exclusivities, play a vital role in sustaining their heritage and fostering intergenerational bonds.

The idea that "the birth of the reader must be at the cost of the death of the author," as proposed by Roland Barthes, can be extended to the performance of *Maun* folklore (148). Unlike written texts with a definitive author, *Maun* folklore is shaped collectively by the community, with neither a single creator nor a singular audience. Each performance becomes a fresh act of meaning-making, where the performers and the audience collaboratively create interpretations rooted in the specific context of the event.

This collaborative process reflects the communal essence of *Maun*. Each enactment draws upon the shared expectations of the festival and the cultural significance of the ritual. At the same time, it adapts to the immediate circumstances, such as the social dynamics of the community or the mood of the festival. As a result, every performance of *Maun* produces a unique meaning, relevant to the present moment, while reinforcing the collective consciousness of the tribe.

In this framework, the performance of *Maun* transcends individual interpretations, aligning the participants and spectators on a common emotional and cultural wavelength. This shared experience creates a communal meaning, where the entire audience participates in the creation of the folklore's significance. Multiple interpretations emerge simultaneously—some may view the performance as a celebration of unity, others as a reminder of historical rivalries or a reinforcement of traditional values. This multiplicity ensures that *Maun* remains dynamic and inclusive.

Moreover, the fluid and adaptive nature of *Maun* folklore resists static narratives or external impositions of meaning. The absence of a fixed "author" or "reader" ensures that each performance remains a living expression of the tribe's identity, sustaining its relevance across generations and resisting attempts to confine it within rigid, singular interpretations. In this way, *Maun* is not just a preservation of the past but an active, evolving cultural practice.

The *Maun* ritual offers a rich space to explore narratives of otherness and ethical engagement, aligning with discussions by humanist thinkers like Nussbaum and Rorty and drawing from Derrida and Levinas. In this ritual, young Khash Rajputs undergo a transformation, a process of "Becoming," where they are initiated into the adult mechanisms of the tribe. As they compete, they encounter a Hegelian Other—rival villages that embody both difference and similarity. While the Other represents adversarial forces to be defeated, the conspicuous sameness in age, caste, gender and ritual blurs the lines between the Self and the Other. This encounter emphasizes that identities in the ritual are not rigid but fluid, shaped through competition, collaboration and shared traditions.

This interplay of sameness and difference fosters a complex ethical engagement. While the ritual's competitive nature seeks symbolic superiority, it simultaneously promotes recognition of the shared humanity and cultural ties that bind the villages together. The young participants thus internalize lessons in power, unity and ethical responsibility, making *Maun* not just a test of strength but a profound engagement with identity and otherness within the Hattee community.

The Changing Landscape of *Maun*: Journey, Roads and Cultural Impact

The *Maun* fair is rooted in a long tradition where participants from various Hattee villages would travel extensive distances on foot, gathering at key locations to participate in this culturally significant event. Historically, these journeys were undertaken without modern transportation, requiring dedication, endurance and community solidarity. The map below highlights the key sites associated with the *Maun* fair held with the Haja and Doshou villages, showcasing the wide geographic spread that participants traversed annually.



Figure 1

Walking for miles across challenging terrain, Hattee tribespeople would travel between villages and across mountains to pilgrimage sites like the sacred Churdhar peak. These pilgrimages served as acts of devotion and fostered a profound connection to the land, symbolizing the unity and collective spirit of the tribe. This tradition of traveling by foot was not merely practical; it reinforced a shared cultural identity, with each journey marking the participants' dedication to upholding Hattee values.

However, the introduction of roads and modern transportation has fundamentally altered this aspect of Hattee life. With the increased convenience of vehicles, the culture of walking long distances has seen a gradual decline. The communal aspect of traveling together, facing physical challenges and connecting with the natural landscape has diminished, impacting the cultural practices of the Hattee tribe, with *Maun* being the most directly affected one. Where once the journey itself was a rite of passage that reinforced unity, the shift to faster transportation has transformed this tradition.

Additionally, the division of the Hattee tribe across administrative boundaries in Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand has gradually introduced changes and variations in practices on each side. These political divisions, though externally imposed, have started to impact the cultural unity of the tribe, with different administrative regulations subtly influencing the way traditions are preserved and adapted. While *Maun* remains a powerful symbol of unity, the split in governance has resulted in variations in the way festivals and practices are managed, leading to small but significant shifts over time.

Despite these changes, the *Maun* fair continues to be celebrated, though its original spirit and format have transformed. The map serves as a reminder of the ancestral routes and the once-shared journey that bound the Hattee people together in a profound display of unity, resilience, and cultural pride. Today, each reenactment of *Maun* invokes memories of this earlier form of the fair, providing the Hattee people with a link to their collective past, even as the pressures of modernization reshape their cultural landscape.

Conclusion

Although the practice of Maun has ended as a living tradition, its memory endures powerfully through the performance of the Harul folklore, which recounts the ritual in vivid detail. This folklore serves not only as a storytelling tradition but also as a conduit through which the Hattee tribe collectively recalls the Maun ritual, thereby sustaining a sense of continuity with their past. Through these performances, the Hattee people keep alive the memory of a time when the tribe functioned as a unified whole, unbroken by the boundaries that now divide them. The performance of Maun in the form of folklore allows them to reflect on the cultural values of unity and resilience that once defined them and that still resonate today. In this way, Harul folklore stands as both a tribute to the heritage of the tribe and a form of cultural resistance, preserving a shared identity that persists even in the absence of the actual ritual. Thus, the narrative of Maun remains a crucial cultural anchor, offering a space for the Hattee people to reconnect with their collective past and reaffirm their identity amid contemporary challenges.

In conclusion, the *Maun* folklore serves as a powerful testament to the resilience of the Hattee tribe, collective memory and cultural sovereignty. Despite external pressures and state-imposed boundaries that attempt to fragment their shared heritage, the Hattee community uses *Maun* to reclaim and sustain its narrative, ensuring continuity across generations. Through collective participation and storytelling, *Maun* embeds the tribe's values of unity, collaboration and strength, forging a cultural resistance that transcends physical borders. As a "ritual of remembrance," the folklore not only commemorates the practice of *Maun* but also actively preserves the Hattee's identity in the face of modernization, state control and an evolving social landscape.

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