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Occupation and Identity: A Social History of the Morias of Assam

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Abstract

The Morias are the earliest Muslim settlers of eastern Assam and known for their historical association with the traditional brass metal craft of the Brahmaputra valley. This paper examines the social basis of the Morias of Assam, highlighting how occupation became the primary marker of their identity since pre-colonial to the colonial periods. Incorporated into the Ahom paik system, the Morias emerged as a specialised brass metal artisan community under the courtly patronage, contributing significantly to the craft-economy and war technology of pre-colonial Assam.

British rule changed Assam's existing political-economic structure, threatening indigenous craft industries. However, despite hardships and continued exploitation, the Morias preserved their hereditary craft, and one of Assam's unique cultural heritages. Over time, for occupational reason, the Morias were settled in different parts of Assam developing a distinct Moria identity. Although, they are not associated with their hereditary craft as a community at present, some pockets still continue and preserve it. Drawing on historical texts such as buranjis, colonial ethnographies and Assamese literary sources, the paper argues that occupational continuity has till present time remained central to the Moria social identity, illustrating the pre-colonial and colonial social basis of the Morias in Assam.

Keywords: Morias, Artisan Community, Brass Metal Industry, Paik System, Colonial ethnography, Identity.

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Introduction

Occupation has historically played an important role in shaping social organization, collective identity, and economic relationships in South Asia. Beyond providing a means of livelihood, occupational specialization has often influenced the organization of labour, relations with political authorities, patterns of settlement, and the transmission of skills across generations. The history of artisan communities therefore offers an important perspective for understanding how social identities developed and changed in response to political and economic transformations. In Assam, the relationship between occupation and social organization was shaped by the administrative institutions of the Ahom state, particularly the *paik* and *khel* systems. These institutions organized labour and specialized services and provided an important context for the development of craft production under royal patronage. Among the occupational groups associated with this system were the Morias, a Muslim community historically connected with brass-metal craftsmanship and, according to accounts cited in the existing literature, other specialized functions within the Ahom state. Their history provides an opportunity to examine the relationship between state organization, occupational specialization, and the development of community identity in pre-colonial Assam. Among the occupational groups associated with this system were the Morias, a Muslim community historically connected with brass-metal craftsmanship and, according to accounts cited in the existing literature, other specialized functions within the Ahom state. Their history provides an opportunity to examine the relationship between state organization, occupational specialization, and the development of community identity in pre-colonial Assam.

The transition to British rule following 1826 introduced new economic and administrative conditions that affected traditional craft production in Assam. Changes in market relations, access to raw materials, merchant control, and competition from manufactured goods created new pressures on artisan livelihoods. The changing occupational circumstances of the Morias provide a case through which to investigate how an identity historically associated with specialized craftsmanship was transformed as members of the community diversified their economic activities. Against this background, the present study examines the historical formation and transformation of the Moria community of Assam, focusing on four interconnected themes: their reported origins and incorporation into the Ahom state; their occupational position within the *paik* and *khel* systems; their migration and settlement across the Brahmaputra valley; and the transformation of brass-metal production under colonial rule. It asks how far occupational specialization contributed to the formation of Moria social identity, how political and economic changes reshaped this relationship, and what the continued practice of brass-making reveals about the persistence of occupational memory. Drawing on historical chroni-

cles, colonial ethnographic and industrial accounts, and secondary scholarship, the article argues that Moria identity should be understood as a historically changing formation shaped by the interaction of state institutions, specialized labour, mobility, and economic transformation. By examining these processes together, the study seeks to contribute to the social and economic history of Assam and to a broader understanding of how artisan communities negotiate continuity and change across different historical periods.

Methodology of the study

This study adopts a qualitative historical approach to examine the formation and transformation of the Moria community of Assam, with particular attention to the relationship between state institutions, occupational specialization, migration, and social identity. The research is based primarily on documentary analysis of historical chronicles, colonial administrative and industrial reports, ethnographic accounts, and secondary scholarship on the socio-economic history of Assam and traditional artisan communities.

Sources such as *Deodhai Asam Buranji* and other relevant historical narratives are examined to investigate the reported origins of the Morias and their incorporation into the Ahom administrative system. Colonial sources, particularly census reports and accounts of traditional industries, are used to reconstruct their occupational position, geographical distribution, and changing economic circumstances during British rule. Secondary studies provide the wider historical context for interpreting administrative organization, artisan mobility, commercialization, and changes in craft production. The sources are analysed chronologically and thematically, focusing on four interconnected dimensions: institutional incorporation, occupational specialization, migration and settlement, and colonial economic transformation. Oral traditions and community narratives are treated as evidence of historical memory and collective identity, while distinguishing their cultural significance from their capacity to establish the factual details of earlier events. The study also recognizes the limitations of retrospective narratives and colonial classifications, which may reflect the perspectives and administrative priorities of their authors. The analysis therefore distinguishes documented evidence from interpretation and identifies claims that require further corroboration. Through this approach, the article seeks to explain how occupational specialization and changing political-economic circumstances contributed to the formation and transformation of Moria social identity across the pre-colonial and colonial periods.

Historical background

Assam, a valley rich in natural resources is a hub to a range of craft productions such as production of silk, bamboo crafts, jewellery making etc. Reference to which can be found in Kautilya's Arthashastra; Periplus of the Erythrean Sea; accounts of the Mohammadan scholars and several regional inscriptions (B.K. Barua,1951: 93-96). Inscriptions also referred to the presence of craft based professional castes or classes such as *Kumbhakaras* or *Hadis* (potters), *Tantuvayas*(weavers), *Sasavita* (engravers), *Silpi* (artists) and appear to have constituted guilds and occupied an important place in administration (S.L. Baruah, 2015: 154). However, Medieval Assam, being relatively isolated from the rest of India, had a peculiar socio-economic pattern of its own (A. Guha,1991:23) The symbiotic relationship between the hills and the plains was the core to the economy during this time. The total volume of trade, both internal and external was small; so was the total domestic produce of the region like the population (A. Guha,1991:23) The incorporation of the Ahom Paik system for the classification and distribution of the labour also imparts a new dynamic into the socio-economic sector. The bulk of the people belonged to the *Paik* class were classified into two categories: *Kanri Paik* and *Chamua Paik* and again to be classified into *Khels* (A. Guha,1991:52). But while the *Kanri Paiks* were liable to obligatory manual of any kind to the state, the *Chamua Paiks* were permitted to contribute periodically shares of the specialized shares of the specialized products or their skilled services (A. Guha,1991:52).

Referring to the specialized crafts, though specialisation on caste lines did not go far in medieval Assamese society, there was specialization in the making of bell-metal and brass utensils, earthenwares, ornaments and a few other articles and in these crafts a certain degree of perfection was reached (A. Guha,1991:24). Apart from this the courtly patronages by Ahom and other ruling dynasties during this period encouraged the flourishment of different new crafts. The brass manufactures constitute one such important artisanal groups during Ahom period along with Sonowal (Gold Washers), losalias (iron smelters), potters (A. Guha,1991:52). The Braziers were included into the category of *Chamua khels* along with the goldsmiths, gold-washers, fishermen, oil-pressers and they were more likely the freemen (A. Guha,1991:52). In this Brazier category, the Muslim braziers or the Morias played a crucial role. Apparently, they were not the only Muslim functional *khels* as the *Farsi- Parhias* (Persian translators) and *Khanikars*(artisans) were also composed of Muslims (A. Guha,1991:93) However, the historical transition of it from an Ahom *Khel* into one of the Assamese Muslim groups separating it from the rest.

Morias in Historical Narrative

The eastern Assam, during the medieval period was witnessing the great conflicts for supremacy between Ahom, Kachari and the Chutiyas. In the first quarter of the 16th century, this conflict for supremacy ended with the decisive victory of the Ahom monarch, Suhungmung over the Chutiyas and the Kacharis (Mohini Saikia, 1978: 300). This event synchronized with the conquest of a part of Kamata and the entire western part of Assam valley by Sultan Hussain Shah of Gauda and the internal trouble during the reign of Nilambara of Khen Dynasty acted as adequate base. The annexation of this region to Gauda by Sultan Hussain Shah, who ruled until his death in 1519 A.D., represented the first successful attempt by Muslim conquerors to establish a Muhammadan regime in Assam after two centuries of efforts. After the conquest of Hussain Shah of Kamrupa and Kamata, a peace treaty was signed between the two rulers of Gauda and Kamata. However, the breaking up of this peace treaty and consequent departure of Kamata king Nilambar to the Ahom court shaped a new base of contestation that followed by prolong war between Ahom and Turko Afghan soldiers first headed by Mit Malik and the great Uzir Rukn Khan that ended with fall of Turbak (Mohini Saikia, 1978: 96-98). The conflict between Turbak and the Ahoms can be seen as an inevitable consequence of ongoing border disputes and hostilities, which were exacerbated by deep-seated mutual distrust and extensive military build-ups on both sides of the frontier. The war began when Turbak launched an invasion into the Ahom territory with a substantial force, attacking the Ahom fort at Temani (S.K.Bhuyan, 1962:63) The conflict lasted for three years, marked by alternating defeats and victories for both sides, until the Ahoms ultimately secured a decisive triumph over the Muhammadans first in Duimonisila near Kaliabor (G.C. Barua, 1930: 73). The fall of Turbak along with Hussain Shah (G.C. Barua, 1930: 73), in the war that lasted for three years from 1531 to 1533 was followed by the Ahom's establishment of authority over the entire western region of ancient Kamarupa from Hajo on the east to Golaghat in the west up to the river Karatoya (Holiram Phukan, 1962: 32). As a result of war, the Ahom collected 28 elephants, 850 horses, war cannons (*Bor Hiloi, Khoka Hiloi*) and wealth as mentioned in Deodhai Assam Buranji (S.K.Bhuyan, 1962:34). The things obtained from the Musalmans as spoils of war, was offered to the *Chaopa Suhum* or king Suhungmung at Duimunisila, by *Chaopha Suklengmung* and *Chaolung Saring* (G.C. Barua, 1930:73). The Muhammadans war captives, 900 in number, first captured in Duimoni Sila. They were taken to Kaliabor, and established there by Ahom King Suhungmung. These war prisoners, considered being the earliest group of Muslim settlers in that valley, later came to be known as the Morias or Mariyas (E.A. Gait, 1892:87). Later historical narratives associate the origins of the Morias with Muslim captives settled in Assam during the Ahom period. The relationship between this reported settlement, the community's subsequent occupational specialization, and the later etymological explanations of the term Moria requires careful evaluation across documentary and oral sources. This group of prisoners after settled down in Kaliabor, were

engaged in different activities. Initially, the captives were assigned different tasks such as cultivation and taking care of elephants by the king but, due to their very low efficacy, they removed from these tasks (Harakanta Barua,1930: 28). This early socio-economic process of belonging is preserved in Assamese oral tradition particularly through their agricultural engagement. A folk narrative records:

No-xo Moriai soxo dhaan aarjilu;

Loy moharojai gun hobo,

Gun nolole dhorom Hobo(Ismail Hossain, 2015: 237*)*

Literally, it narrates how the 900 (*No-xo*) war captives produced a meager yield, yet presented it to the King with the hope that he would graciously accept it. This proverb may have another meaning that is used to describe if someone does a little but shows as much (Hossain, 2015: 237). This proverb also indicates why the Morias transitioned away from agriculture and eventually became specialized brass-workers which became their historical legacy. Even the of etymology of the term *Moria* which has been interpreted in multiple ways across written and oral narrative justified their relation with the brass metal industry. A widely held view traces the term to the Assamese verb *mar* (to beat), signifying the community's historical association with brass-work and the rhythmic hammering central to their hereditary craft.

Morias in the Medieval administrative and economic setup

The political economy during the Medieval Assam entered into a much complexed and systematic venture compare to the earlier period. The period not only witnessed the development of regional dynasties and continuous foreign intrusions from the side of Banga but also its socio-economic compositions also became apparent. The Ahom administrative system with its institutions of *paik* and *khel* system and setting up of the new villages with a unit of diverse social groups produced a sustained socio-economic mechanism. Whereas the Paik system regulated tax collection and registered *paik's* customary rights; the *khel* wise system regulated the co-existence of the social groups in village administration. However, the latter half of the seventeenth century witnessed a surplus population in the Ahom kingdom with its expansion. A fresh man power census was undertaken and several new administrative-military offices were created along with the creation of many functional *khels.* As a result of that the Paik system was remodelled and it now limited the registered *paik's* customary right to hold a piece of wet rice land to a prescribed norm of two puras or 2.66 acres per *paik* (A.Guha,1991:

85) The imposition of a limit to a *paik's* tax free holding of wet-rice lands suggests that old villages were already facing the problem of scarcity of land owing to overcrowding and that the state was facing growing need for resources in forms other than labour rent (A.Guha,1991: 85). The surplus population, once identified, was redistributed in a planned manner. Individuals were separated from their respective households in old villages and settled in desolate areas ((A. Guha,1991: 85). Among these population some were functional such as the Muslim braziers or Morias. (A. Guha,1991: 88) The *Deodhai Assam Buranji* mentioned that during the time of Jayadhwaj singha, Momai Tamuli Borbua established the villages by organizing groups of families. 2 families of Brahmins, 2 families of Ganak, 2 families of Kathar, 2 families of Kalitas, 2 families of Keots, 2 families of Koch, 2 families of Chutia, 2 families of Buruks, 2 families of Borias, 2 families of Ahoms, 2 families of Gorias, 2 families of Morias, 2 families of Dom, 2 families of Hari, organised like this." (S.K.Bhuyan, 1990:130). However, H.K. Barpujari asserted that a close examination of Momai Tamuli's reorganization schemes proved that this system was also aimed at striking at the roots of localism and unifying the numerous local features into a united whole. (S.K.Bhuyan, 1990:130) This narrative is quite convincing to understand the social history of the Morias. The distribution of the Morias in this new socio-economic set up does provide a shape to their new social identity formation. Interestingly apart from crafting of the brass there were evidences for Moria's engagement into the occupation of liquor- brewing (S.K.Bhuyan, 1990:130).

The occupational credibility of the Morias is also connected with another important production during the Medieval time. In *Ahomor Din*, Hiteswar Borboruah mentioned about and introduction and production of the artilleries by the Ahoms (Hiteswar Borboruah,1997: 473). Manufacturing of artillery of various kinds and sizes was at peak during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Nandita Khandria,1990). Since the sixteenth century, the manufacture of newly introduced guns and gunpowder had been organized by the state on a high level of skill which contrasted with the general backwardness of the of the technology (A. Guha,1991: 24). Amalendu Guha stated that " the fire-arms, introduced in the area first in the 1530s , were increasingly put to use and, by sixteen sixties excellent gunpowder, matchlocks and cannon were manufactured locally" (A. Guha,1991:85) These incidents and the respective time frame closely connect the relation between the Morias with the production artillery production during this time. Primarily engaged on warfare, the Morias previously considered other types of occupation such as agriculture as demeaning and ending up taking brass-craft as their primary occupation. A group of captive soldiers already accustomed with the using and making of *Hiloi* (cannon) added a new dimension to the Ahom war mechanism. The engagement of the Morias in this production process was supported by the presence of the *Bachuoi Phoids*, a clan among the

Morias engaged in production of artilleries (Pulin Kalita & Intaj Ali, 2018: 41) The other important clan among the Morias were *Tamuli Barua Phoid*, *Burha Goya Phoid*, and *Khobor Khotola Phoid*. *Tamuli Barua Phoid* assisted the king in the royal court. They were responsible for supplying the betel-nuts to the Ahom royal court. The function of the *Burha Goya Phoid* was to resolve administrative matters such as general grievances of the villagers. The village headmen belong to this *Phoid*. *Khobor Khotola Phoid* was responsible for providing news to the king, mainly engaged in espionage. The were skilled in trade and waterways. Whenever they saw news of the enemy or boats, they would inform the king with their boats. The presence of these clans helps us to understand how the Ahom Paik system utilised the labour of the Morias in different professional utilities.

Migration, Settlement and Occupational Mobility of the Morias

The migration of the Morias into different part of the Brahmaputra valley also constitutes a part of its identity. The Moria population is presently distributed across various districts of Assam, from Kamrup to Tinsukia, reflecting their historical migration from eastern Assam. The necessity of remaining in proximity to their markets compelled the Morias to undertake considerable spatial mobility. Gait observes that "the necessity for living near their market has led the Morias to migrate a good deal, and within the last few years one colony has left Sibsagar and settled in Mangaldai, and another has gone from Jorhat to Silghat in the Nowgong district" As a group of professional brass metal artisans, they travelled from place to place, at times either due to courtly requirements or for their own survival. H.K. Barpujari put forward that "The Mariyas generally travelled about several districts and remained in villages where their services were required" (H.K. Barpujari,1990: 104). Sources cited, some Moria families along with the other social groups were settled down in North West side of present day Mangaldoi (Abdur Rahman, 2008:220) According to the local belief, the Darrangi king asked these Morias to produce war weaponries (Abdur Rahman, 2008:220). This can be understood from the context of how shifting political landscapes and the need to seek forms of patronage from wealthy elites have necessitated the migration of the artisanal communities (Thomas Cahmbers,2020). Nonetheless Douglas Haynes and Tirthankar Roy argue that craft migration during the pre-colonial and colonial periods was not just about economic survival, suggesting that some occupational groups like the weavers were always mobile, willing to pick up from regions in decline and move to those areas in expansion (Thomas Cahmbers, 2020). Pradyot Kumar Guha asserted that occurrence of the epidemic such as Kala-azar, also led to the migration of the Morias (P.K. Guha,2007:34) The Moamoria rebellion and the Burmese invasion are other noteworthy reasons for the migration of the Morias from Eastern Assam to Western Assam. Thus, the mobility of the Morias has always been a strategy for

ensuring subsistence, surviving famine, improving economic livelihoods like the other occupational communities in pre-colonial and colonial India.

Moria Artisans, Brass Metal craft and Colonialism

The latter half of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries witnessed significant political and economic upheavals in Assam. The Moamoria Rebellion (1769–1805) and the Burmese invasions (1817–1826) weakened the institutional foundations of the Ahom monarchy and disrupted agricultural production, trade, and artisanal activities. The British annexation of Assam in 1826 subsequently introduced new administrative and economic structures that transformed the organization of production, labour, and trade. These changes created new opportunities for commercial exchange but also presented challenges to traditional craft industries.

Historical and administrative sources indicate that a visible growth had taken place in the internal and external commerce of the valley following British annexation of Assam in 1826. The period from 1826 to 1873 was a period of transition for Assam's pre-capitalist economy into its colonial phase (A.K. Guha, 2016: 25). Guha stated that "British capital penetrated the economy and started building an infrastructure to sustain the exotic capitalistic set-up collaborating traders, bankers, lawyers and clerks from other Indian provinces came as camp-followers" (A.K. Guha, 2016: 25). Thus, the economy was monetised and the closed society was exposed to immigration of labour, new skills, new vices and new ideas. Nandita Khandria inquires Ahom economy as an almost closed economy, adding that these contributed a great deal towards the lack of commercialization of Assamese cottage industry in compare to its counterparts in the neighbouring states of Bengal, Bihar etc. (Nandita Khandria,1990). Though some household based traditional industries flourished under Ahom patronage, the civil war, Burmese invasion, followed by administrative changes brought by the British, had weakened the base for traditional industries. However, few industries were languidly surviving in the Brahmaputra valley such as textile industry and metal manufacturing. Tirthankar Roy suggests that craft sector remained relatively vibrant, as craftworkers were expecting gain from trade by obtaining access to imported raw materials and distant markets (Tirthankar Roy, 2026).

Thus, the production of brass was one of the lucrative occupations during the Ahom rule and generating the highest revenue (Rs. 5/) during the time of colonial rule (H.K. Barpujari,1963:25) In the report "Notes on some industries of Assam: from 1884-1895", H.Z Darrah argues that "Brass utensils are generally made in Assam by a particular caste, known by the generic name of Moria." The work was

done in several parts of the province including District of Darrang, Sivasagar, Nowgong, Dibrugarh. Most of the villages which were seats for brass manufacture were named as *Moria Gaon*. *Moria Gaon* simply means village of the Morias.

However, the Morias primarily functioned as manufacturer of brass products and had limited involvement in their marketing. The trade in brass-metal products was largely controlled by the Marwari-Mahajan class during colonial period persisted into the present day. Even, the raw materials for its production for example the brass sheets, were supplied to the Morias by this merchant group. Brass is an alloy of copper and zinc and usually in the proportion of 2 to 1 or 4 to 3, but it is rarely made in India, being generally imported as sheet-brass. (Sir George Watt, 1908: 401-404) "Marwaris", as observed by Gait, "often sell them on credit, on the understanding that the manufactured utensils will be sold to them at a somewhat reduced rate" (Sir George Watt, 1908: 401-404). This was a common phenomenon observed in many parts of colonial India. The scope for private investment remained limited either in European enterprises, or in trade by Marwari merchants. Marwari trader-cum-moneylenders monopolised the internal trade as agents of the British trading houses of Calcutta, who in turn worked for their metropolitan counterparts in London" (A.K.Guha, 2016: 25) Thus, the Morias had bare minimal involvement in regulating and controlling the trade on brass produces. Gait argues, "The cost of the brass sheets used by the Morias in Dibrugarh is said to be 14 annas per seer, and retail price of the manufactured articles from Re. 1 to 1.1 per seer, if sold to Marwaris, and Re. 1.2 if sold to the public." Though direct sale of their products to the public would have yielded higher profits for the Morias, their limited expertise in marketing, coupled with the entrenched authority of the Mahajans, made it difficult for them. As Khandria argues, the subsequent competition from imported articles left the domestic industries without much hope for reconstructing it independently (Nandita Khandria,1990). Apart from that, by this time Bengal and Calcutta became the centre for economic activities in eastern India monopolised by industries from neighbouring Bengal Bihar, Orissa. Thus, it became difficult for a few industries that languidly survived in Brahmaputra valley, e.g. textile, metal manufacturing to compete their counterparts in the neighbouring states (Nandita Khandria,1990). Additionally, as noted by Gait, by the closing years of the nineteenth century, market was already filled with cheaper products.

> "Cheaper and better articles of foreign manufacture began to oust the local products, and most of the persons engaged in making the latter, when they found that their trade was becoming unprofitable, abandoned it, and turned their attention to agriculture."

This also affected the occupational choices of the traditional artists like Morias as well. Khandria

observed the Morias of Brahmaputra valley and stated that Morias who were braziers, by profession were almost without exception cultivators too (Nandita Khandria,1990) This statement helps us to understand the new trend of occupational shift among the Morias by the end of the nineteenth century. Once a prosperous seat of brass metal crafts, the Morias of Nowgong and Tezpur no longer practice the craft and most of them are now agriculturalist. The traditional handicraft brass metal industry is now practiced by only a hand full of Moria artisans in Hajo in Kamrup district, and by a few Moria artisans in Uzanbazar, in Kamrup Metropolitan district. The craft is also sparsely practiced in a few other pockets of Assam.

Brass-metal works, which had a glorious past, has now reached a stage of morbidity and stagnation (N.Bhattacharjee,1981:V) Shortage of raw materials in reasonable price, low production capacity, lack of adequate finance, competition with machine made products of cheaper materials, lack of new designs, exploitation of poor artisans by the middlemen, absence of well-planned network of centres for marketing the finished products are some of the factors severely hampering the growth of the handicraft (.N. Bhattacharjee,1981: V). Nevertheless, despite an overall dismay this handicraft industry has not reached a stage of extinction and there are a few Moria craftsmen who believe that by practicing the craft they are keeping alive a traditional occupation and a rich heritage.

Conclusion

The history of the Morias of Assam demonstrates how occupation is not just livelihood but also forms identity and social basis of a community in South Asia. From their incorporation into the Ahom paik and khel system in the mediaeval period, the Morias gradually came to be associated with specialised brass-metal craftsmanship, while some sections also contributed to artillery production and other functions within the Ahom state. Their occupational skills not only shaped their economic position but also influenced their settlement patterns, mobility and interaction with the wider society. The colonial period brought significant changes to the economic structure of Assam. The introduction of a monetised economy, the growing influence of merchants and middlemen, and competition from cheaper manufactured goods weakened the traditional handicraft brass industry of the Morias. As opportunities declined, many Moria artisans shifted towards cultivation and other occupations. Thus, the occupational identity that once distinguished the community gradually lost its universal character.

However, the social history of the brass metal craft is not simply one of decline. The continued practice of brass-making by a small number of artisans, particularly in parts of Hajo and Uzanbazar and other place, reflects an enduring connection with their past. For the Morias the brass metal craft

represents not merely an occupation but a social history linking their collective memory and cultural heritage. The social history of the Morias therefore reveals how identity can evolve with changing economic circumstances while still retaining traces of occupational traditions. Their experience also reminds us that preserving a craft means preserving a part of the community's history, memory and cultural identity.

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