

The Green Parrot and Other Poetic Beauty of Orāon Folksongs

Dr. Milan Mohanta

Lecturer, Rairangpur College, Rairangpur, Odisha, India

ABSTRACT

Oraon is one of the progressive tribes in Odisha. The people of this community communicate each other in Kurunkh and Sadri languages. Thousands of Oraon folksongs are in prevalence in these two languages, in this state. During my field work I collected some of these both from primary and secondary sources. In this essay I've analyzed the aesthetic views of Oraons, reflected in their folksongs. As I found they have very particular and subtle sense of beauty; which collects the elements of expression from their own small periphery. Over all, the real small incidents, experiences of their life and the natural scenic sights are the key source of Oraons' aesthetic world of imagination.

KEYWORDS: Kurunkh- A North-Dravidian dialect, Orāon- A progressive tribe of Odishā, Budi- An wild creeper, Dewān- The minister of Orāon social domain, Talang- The lower part of of a dhoti, Banāi- A town of Sundargarh district of odishā, Gandari- A small bird, Kundari- A kind of vegetable, Mānder- A music system made of earthen drum and dry skin of animals, Dhol- Drum, Kimād- A wild green used as food, Pālki- A bamboo craft used in marriage ceremony for transportation of the bride. Kusum- The name of a wild tree, Bijabane- In the forest named Bijaban, Chandowā & Pāenri- Ornaments used by the females of Oraon society.

The Orāons, concentrate across the Mid and North-East India, speak **Kurunkh**, a North-Dravidian sub-dialect as their mother tongue and most often share ideas using **Sādri**, a lingua franca, spoken in the adjoining areas of Odisha and Jharkhand in India.

Usually they contribute several songs during their festivals and marriages in these two languages- Kurunkh and Sādri. Even they sing some devotional songs during their assemblage in 'Pārhā', an emerging socio-religious hub of their community. In this way Oraon folksongs can be classified into three prongs in consideration of its context-(a) Festive Songs, (b) Marriage Songs and (c) Devotional Songs. However, we have to analyze here exclusively the poetic beauty of all these songs.

Before going to the analysis of the aesthetic view of Oraon folksong it would be mention-worthy that the parrot is one of the inevitable poetic elements of their marriage songs. They express their sense of beauty taking parrot as a metaphor of a young unmarried, pretty girl. Parrot symbolizes the active, productive, soft and subtle physical beauty of a girl. These kinds of metaphorical expression envisage some organic-images as below.

"The green paddy field

Oh my mother!

See the green field

Parrot flows down to it.

Oh my dad ! parrot comes forward

Whether a grown-up daughter is there

How to cite this paper: Dr. Milan Mohanta "The Green Parrot and Other Poetic Beauty of Orāon Folksongs" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-5 | Issue-4, June 2021, pp.332-335, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd41272.pdf



IJTSRD41272

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To that home men come forward."

Or

"Where did you come from Parrot?

Stood and stared like a black crow

Sitting on the dried tree

Like a black crow

You came from the east only

My father is not at home

Mother is not as well

From where did you come, dear guest!"

In the second song the parrot has been depicted as a simile of a boy, who is supposed to be the bridegroom of a virgin girl. In this way the social sub-conscious of Oraon folk is engrossed by the beauty of the wild green-parrot again as follows:

"The green parrot

The green parrot

Pretty the parrot

The rājā on a pālki and an elephant

Comes with the dewān." (Archer W.G)

Or

"In the corn fields, in the wheat fields

Parrots from other sides have gathered

The parrot of the house has flown

The parrot of the house has flown away to the jungle.

Parrots from other sides have gathered."

In this way very ordinary and very negligible elements are found to be colorful, and unprecedently beautiful in imagination of Oraon-folk-poet, which are negligible in the eyes of great poets. Therefore the felt truths as well as the blissful small scenario become the classic and eternal beauty for him/her. As such the aesthetic sense of Oraon-folk-poet is always found to be inclined to truth and beauty-

" Oh the moon rises

Over the purple headed mountain

Our moon rises up

Let it be risen up

It would look after the world

Our world would come under

Supervision of the moon

The country would be supervised

By the moon

Our moon rises up

Let it be risen up, risen up."

Or

Oh dear the Tamarind pasted bride

*Stands under the **kusum** tree*

Gold rings swing beneath both the ears."

Or

Green-Kimād

The red colored green-Kimād

*Red **fudunā** of the towel of my*

Young boy-friend

Attracts the young girls

The red colored Kimād

The green-colored Kimād

The green-Kimād."

The beautified adornment of an Oraon chap is the symbol of his aristocracy as well as a delicate element of aesthetic sense for a young maiden girl. Even wearing of a flowery-towel and **Chādar** of a boy stands as the cause and parameter of unavoidable attraction for an Oraon girl. She cannot forget the colourful gesture of that adorned and decorated boy and she becomes unstable herself in memoir. All her mobility, activities and every walk of life become unsteady. She suffers from embarrassing situations in front of parents and elders for her abnormality. But no unfavorable situation can suppress her strong emotions, soaked and penetrated by the attraction of sublimity. She urges her voice spontaneously-

***Banāi Banāi** rebukes me oh mummy!*

*I will be flying away with the young chap of **Banāi***

*Hi the young chap of **Banāi***

*Hi the young chap of **Banāi***

*His colored towel and its colorful **fudunā***

*I will be running away with the young chap of **Banāi**."*

Oraon folksongs reveals the physical get-up and adornment including exclusive behavior, gesture and interest etc.- the inner beauty of a person. Even a very negligible incident but mind glowing for the Oraon-folk is used as poetic element or simile of songs.

An artist gets satisfied by pouring the best artistic touch to his/her art. S/he gets inspired and pleased expressing the artistic form, gesture, rhythm and tempo on his/her own face. But the wide scope of such self expression is very rare and limited in case of folk artist. Many of the times folk artists are engaged in the struggle for survival and earning of their livelihood. Consequently the preservation and propagation of art work is neglected by them. Still their squeezed artistic life is found to be full of nectar. A brief revelation of their artistic view is happened from within the smallest events of the restless life. They feel the value of their art of life and the price of valuable contribution towards others betterment in every walk of life. Even they sing looking at the healthy movement of their hard working.

"Oh my buffalo comes forward

Jumps and runs away

Being mud pasted

My buffalo jumps away

Twelve feet oh my dear

Oh my buffalo comes forward

Being mud pasted

Jumps and runs around."

Naturally the sub-conscious of folk-poet is exaggerated by the beauty of small things that come across in the incidents of day to from this category. Some illusive as well as exclusive scenic instance is found in their folksongs.

"Only the ring of my toes

Dear mother

Nothing is looked well than that

Without the ring of my toes

Nothing looks good

Oh my dear mother !"

Or

"Oh the turmeric pasted bride

That turmeric colored bride

*Stands under the **Kusum** tree*

Gold swings beneath both her ears

Oh my dears...

Gold swings beneath both the ears."

Or

"One of the girls looking darkened like a crow

Oh my dears

Father of a crane is interested there on the top

On her leaf made rain-coat

The elder one has decorated herself by plastic papers

Oh my dears

Feather of a crane is there

On her leaf-made rain-coat

You are a picturesque **Gandari** (a colour-feathered small bird)

I am a well made butterfly

Oh my dear

You are the Gandari in the forest and fro

I the butterfly only at **Bijabane**".

Or

"The **budi** creeper is growing up along the upland

I pounded the spices for budi

The budi creeper is growing up along the cornfield

Oh dear that looks lightened and pretty

Oh her bangles tune

When she grinds on the pestle-stone

Her bangles tune much

Oh dear the tune thrills more

Oh my dear

The bangles tune."

Or

"A hill side of small size

The **karayā** flowered on it and waved in the air

You go my younger brother to the hill side

Pluck some karayā for me

And would wave in the air

Oh my dear !"

The Oraon love to perform their traditional dance and songs to a great extent. Through the unbreakable interest towards dancing and singing they reveal their joyous sentiment. Whether the drum is beaten everything looks to them beautiful including the green and grey **kundari**, a vegetable grows in a creeper in Oraon courtyards. Thus the commonest scenery of one's own periphery appeals a lot to a folk and as a result of that s/he sings as follows-

"The green **kundari**

My mother the ripen **kundari**

When the sweet drum is beaten

Green one is looks ripen

When the dual music comes from the drums

The green Kundari looks ripen

When the **dhol** and **mānder** are beaten.

The green **kundari** becomes ripen."

Many incidents happen in one's day to day life but some of them remain unforgettable lifelong. They remain deep-rooted up to one's unconscious. One likes to cherish these experiences in the form of folksongs, when a scope of public dance forum is come upon. Accurate images of such subtle feelings, generated from such experiences-

"How beautiful the train is !

Let's go for watching it

The bogeys are moving to and fro

The fire is on the front top

The train is moving like the cloud

Let's go for watching the

How beautiful the train is...!"

The youth-intervened life of Oraon folk becomes emotionless and distracted when one cannot join in dance. S/he reveals the anxiety if anywhere dance and music start amidst the dense forest or on the valley of a hill. S/he shows interest to visit the dance sight at least once overtaking the obstacle, created by the flora and fauna of the hill site. It happens only because of the persuasion of his/ her sense of aesthetics-

"The music sounds on the Dhardhari hill

Hi let's go for watching the

The young male and females are hand in hand

Let's go for watching my dear

The young male and females are in a chain

We would go for seeing them

Obviously we would go there

But how would we return back

The young chap would abscond us from the path

Hi let's go for watching the dance

The young male and females are hand in hand

The young male and females are in a chain."

According to Lokaratna Kunjabihari Dash all things seen compact in folk-world are underlying in similarity only. What are dissimilar or distracted have no beauty. Exactly in the social sector Oraons have their own particular type of life style. As if grinding of dal in a stone grinder looks serene only in the case of a woman. Similarly it looks lovely if a man moves around in the **ākhrā** shouldering **mānder**, the earthen musical instrument only.

"Oh the grinder revolves

The **mānder** sounds deep

Oh the grinder revolves

The grinder is for girl

mānder is fit to the boy

Oh my dear

The grinder revolves."

The maiden girl is no doubt a becoming in her parental house, but the in-law's house is only the befitting one for a

grown-up Oraon girl. She becomes self-driven there with divinity. Hence forward she starts an outlet of her new worldly life. Especially, in view of folk poet the maiden girl is been praise worthy in her in-law's house like the productive corn field, repaired and decorated by its care taker. So the grown-up girl is meant for others. She should be nurtured and decorated in her parental home for an unknown grown-up boy only-

"Oh my foolish brother

A sister does not fit in our home

We have to hand over her to others

A sister does not fit in our home

The ridges round the corn field look gorgeous

And it been scraped off annually for self

But the sister is been nurtured for others

Up to her marriage."

The fascinated male tends to poor himself to the female with all his flexible personality all his adornments are likely to descend down on the earth because of in-attention. And the female partner may dance for a long time. She may present a subtle denying to the male partner and her lecherous behavior by singing songs. She appeals with a sweet and soft gesture towards the tendency and lack of self-control of the male. On the other hand the tempted male cannot stop his music and dance due to his unbreakable attraction toward the fine art of dancing. He tries his level best to attract the female partner by dancing and creating music. Both the dance and forget their self entity. Thus the exclusive experience of reciprocal love between male and females is expressed in Oraon songs-

"Oh dear! the intoxication of rice beer

*The **talang** tends to creep on the earth*

The dhoti creeps as well

Oh ! let it to be crept on the earth

Let it creep my dear sister

I would dance along with you

Oh my dear

I would dance besides you."

Or

*"Go slow and steady dear **māndriyā***

*The **pāenri** of my foot swings and waves*

Go slow and steady my māndriyā

*The **chāndowā** on my chest swings and waves*

Go slow and steady my dear."

Thus the beauty-mingled-poetic-sentiment of Oraons is found to be curious in search of the source of beauty from

their own periphery and state of affairs only. It seems as if truth is the only prime aspect of their songs. (Truth is beauty, beauty is truth- John Keats). Over all, the real small incidents, experiences of their life and the natural scenic sights are the key source of Oraons' aesthetic world of imagination.

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