Ballad Tradition of Odisha: A Bird's Eye View

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Preamble -Singing of Ballads is a rich and living tradition of a multi-cultural country like India. Ballads are sung in varied forms. Each culture has its indigenous form of ballad singing. In Odisha, the singing of ballads is an essential part of some of the rituals and is closely associated with the cultural life of *Oḍiā* people. It just counted as the part and parcel of their cultural itinerary. In this paper, we will discuss the Ballad tradition of Odisha.

***Oḍiā* as a Language -**There are 22 official 'scheduled' languages in India. They are: -*Assamese, Bengali, Bodo, Dogri, Eastern Panjabi, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Kashmiri, Konkani, Maithili, Malayalam, Marathi, Meitei, Nepali, Oḍiā, Sanskrit, Santali, Sindhi, Tamil, Telugu & Urdu*. Amongst the scheduled languages *Oḍiā*is an Indian language, belonging to the Indo-Aryan/Indian branch of the Indo-European language family.

  Oḍiā is mainly spoken in the Indian states of Odisha & in parts of West Bengal, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh and in the city of Surat (Gujarat State). *Oḍiā* is one of the many official languages in India & it is the official language of Odisha and the second official language of Jharkhand State. It is closely related to, *Baṅgalā*(Bengali), *Ahomiyā*(Assamese) &*Maithilī* as a direct descendant of *Māgadhi*. Like four sister-languages of South India i.e., *Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam & Kannad*, *Oḍiā, Baṅgalā&Ahomiyā* are to be considered as triad-sister languages, because they all come from the same *Māgadhi Apabhraṁsa*.In 2014*Oḍiā* is declared as one of the Classical Language by Government of India along with*Tamil*(declared in 2004)*, Sanskrit*(declared in 2005)*, Malayalam*(declared in 2013)*, Kannad*(declared in 2008)& *Telgu*(declared in 2008).

The Origin of *Oḍiā* Language -The origin of *Oḍiā* Language goes to early times. The origin of *Oḍiā*language can be glimpsed from the inscriptions of *Khāraveḻa* at *Hātī Gumphā*of *Khaṇḍagiri* and the script in the Ashokan decrees at *Jaugaḍa* and *Dhauḻi*. The writings of *Hātī Gumphā* closely resemble the modern *Oḍiā* language, rather than the language in the Ashokan edicts. It is also believed that *Pāli* was the original language of Odisha in ancient period as the inscriptions of *HātīGumphā*are in *Pāli* language. Though the stone inscription of *Ananta Varma Bajrahasta Deva* which is put against the year 1051 A.D is generally regarded as the first manifestation of *Oḍiā*script and language, but the origin of the *Oḍiā*literature can be traced to *"Bauddha Gāna O Dohā"*, otherwise known as *Caryāpada* written by the Buddhist *Siddhas* of Odisha. This manuscript text was collected from Nepal State Library and published by *Haraprasad Shastry* in Bengali script. This very important manuscript throws a lot of light on the growth of languages in the whole of eastern India. It is proved that this text was composed in tenth century A.D. *Purṇṇacandrabhāṣākos'a* proved that this is the earlier form of *Oḍiā*language. Again scholars collected some copper plates from *Patia* village of Cuttack & Bhubaneswar, where *Oḍiā*language engraved in *Kuṭiḻa*Script. These plates are engraved at the time of king *Subhaṅkara Kes'arī*dated 7th century A.D. The *Oḍiā*language begins to appear from this period in inscriptions with *Oḍiā*scripts in temples, copper plates, palm-leaf manuscripts etc. Traces of *Oḍiā*words and expressions have been found in inscriptions dating from the 7th

century A.D. For example, the *Oḍiā* word *'kumbhāra'* 'potter' occurs in a copper plate inscription 'belonging to a date not later than the 7th century A.D.'. Similarly, in inscriptions of 991 A.D., *Oḍiā* words like *'bhituru'* 'from inside' and *'pandara'* 'fifteen' can be found. 'An *Oḍiā* Passage' also has been found in another inscription of about 715 A.D. There were other stone inscriptions at Bhubaneswar in 13th century which point to the gradual evolution of *Oḍiā* script and language. *Oḍiā* literature has a vivid and varying history through the ages. *Oḍiā* language perhaps received its final shape by 13th century and this is available in Mārkaṇḍa Dāsa's ballad *'Kes'aba Koili'*, S'āraḻā Dāsa's *'Mahābhārata'* and *Abadhuta Nārāyaṇa*'s epic in prose *Rudrasudhānidhi*, *S'is'u Veda* and *Saptāṅga* written by *Nātha* saints are treated as some of the earliest available works in *Oḍiā* language[1].

Nomenclature of the word ballad - What do we mean by ballad? The word Ballad is of French provenance. This word is derived from the French word *'ballade'* in late 15th century denoting a light, simple song. The sense 'narrative poem' dates from the mid 18th century. The Italian *ballata* (dance song), the Celtic *gwaelawd* (epic song), the Russian *bilina,* the Ukrainian *dumi,* the South Slav *narodne pesme, junačke pesme,* the Spanish *románce,* the Danish, Norwegian *folkeviser,* the Hungarian *ballada,* the Latin *ballare* and Greek *ballizein* 'to dance' are the same genre. Ballads are simple narrative songs or alternative poem suitable for singing in various occasions.

The comprehensive aspects related to human life bears resemblance to folk elements, viz. folk religion, folk belief, folk literature, folk medicine, folk art etc. Even acclaimed mainstream literature cannot claim that it is free from influence of folk elements. The stalwart creators of literature consciously or unconsciously have used elements of folk in their creations. So in this way literature is not free from folk elements. Folk literature normally is associated with various festivals, social customs, rituals of a village based society etc..

Ballads are the part and parcel of this Folk literature. Folk literatures, especially the ballads, aremainly preserved in oral tradition and they have beentransmitted from generation to generation throughmouth and ear. This is because there was no language in which to write them down. These ballads are migratory incharacter as they travel from place to place with theitinerary performers or bards and they are dynamic innature as they grow vibrantly through the ages. Inthis sense, they can be described as Literature ofGrowth, a growing organism. They can be termed ascollective poems since they echoed the collective voiceand the collective personality of the groups or clanswhich they represent. Consequently, they are notindividual products and hence they have noindividual authorship. They have mostly ascribedauthors and not real authors. When they aredocumented in palm-leaf, paper or any other mediumthey become fossilised versions and the growth ofthat particular version is arrested. But in latter period ballads are composed by various authors. However, in the modern world, the preservation & transmission of such literary treasures has become easier. The availability of advanced technology and common languages has not only improved the documentation but the accessibility of these resources for people in every part of the world, as well.

Distinguishing Features of Ballads- Ballads, no matter which category they fall in, mostly rely on simple and easy-to-understand language ordialect from its origin. Stories about hardships, tragedies, love and romance etc. are standard ingredients of ballads. This is irrespective of geographical origins. Another conspicuous element of any ballad is the recurrence of certain lines at regular intervals. Ballads can also be in interrogative form with appropriate answers to every question they ask. Ballads seldom offer a direct message about a certain event, character or situation. It is left to the audience to deduce the moral of the story from the whole narration.

Ballads of Odisha- The present Odisha was known as *Utkal* in antediluvian period. The name signifies that Odisha was the country of all type of Arts. The original works of *Oḍiā* literature like *Saṁhitā, Gītā, Māḻikā, Bhajana, Jaṇāṇa, Cautiśā, Chānda, Caupaḍī, Chiṭāu, Poi, Boli, Padiā, Campū, Pālā, Suāṅga, Liḷā, Rāsa, Samar Sāhitya* &c. have immense popularity not only in Odisha but also in other provinces with its translated forms.

Ballad Singing Tradition of Odisha- Each culture has their indigenous form of Ballad singing. The great Odishan culture is not an exception to this. In Odisha, singing of Ballads is an essential part of life. Ballads are in Odisha sung in varied subjects and forms. They also associated with some rituals, history, myths, societies, particular persons or events etc..Again Odisha deserves a special share of credit on account of its variegated assortment of folk ballads handed down from its long past.

According to the singing style of *Oḍiā* ballads we see it is of two sorts. They are (i) Solo-singing ballads and (ii) Group-singing ballads. Let us discuss the both.

(i) Solo-singing Ballads - Solo-singing ballads are smaller in size, different in texture and intense in action in comparison with the group singing ballads. The ballad sung by a single singer and not accompanied by any musical instruments is generally known as solo-singing ballads.The ballads related to *Oṣā* and various*Bratas*, *Kāndaṇā* or Lamentduring marriage ceremony are the examples of this type.The basic theme of *Oṣā* and *Bratas* is to glorify a particular god of goddess by describing his or her power of punishment and generosity. Again the *Kāndaṇā* or Lament at the time of farewell of a daughter from her parental home is very much sorrowful and heart touching also. In such type of solo-singing ballads the singer sings the ballad without any musical instruments. We find some exceptions to this. The ethical songs like*Baulāgāi* (Baulā, the Cow), *Dui Brāmhaṇa* (Two Bramhins), *Duiti pakṣī* (Two Birds) etc. ofthe*Nātha Yogī's*are some peculiar exceptions. Sometimes the *Nātha Yogī's* are singing ballads from tradition or from their own with a typical musical instrument like *kendarā* or *ekatārā* or sometimes without any musical instruments. Again sometimes the *kelā*-s or *savara*-s plays ballads with *nāutumbā* a typical balladic musical instrument, and sometimes the *Dhuḍuki* player plays ballads with the typical balladicmusical instrument *dhuḍuki*. In this category usually ethical and religious thoughts got prominence. Again some famous solo-singing ballads are - *'Ṭīkā Govinda Candra'* or *'Govinda Candra''* or '*Gīta Govinda Candra',Deuḻatoḻā* (making of the temple), *'Pāṭuā'* songs etc..

(ii) Group-singing Ballads -The second category is group-singing ballads. Ballads which are sung in groups have their own variety and attraction. *'Dāśakāṭhiā'*and *'Pālā'* are two main forms of this category. Let us discuss them.

(a) Dāśakāṭhiā/Dāśakāṭhi– It is a indigenous form of Odishan group singing ballads, in which two singers take part. Amongst them one is the primary singer and another one is the helper i.e., secondary singer. They sing episodes from religious texts, mostly from *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata*. They play witha pair of typical wooden clappers called, *Dāśakāṭhi*. *'Dāśa'* in *Oḍiā* means servant and '*Kāṭhi*' means stick. So, *Dāśakāṭhi* means stick of the servant. A myth is associated with the derivation of the name. According to that, the benevolent servant Hanumān played it first with the two branches from a tree and thus *Dāśakāṭhi* originated. As Hanumān considers himself as the servant of Lord Rāmacandra,the sticks played by him is came to be known as *Dāśakāṭhi*, the stick of the servant. Usually *Dāśakāṭhi* is performed for general entertainment; but sometimes it also played during the naming ceremony of a new born etc..

(b) Pālā -*Pālā* is a unique form of balladry in Odisha, which artistically combines elements of theatre, classical Odissi music, highly refined Oḍiā and Sanskrit poetry, wit etc. It is more sophisticated than the other Oḍiā ballad tradition, *Dāśakāṭhiā*.

Normally *Pālā* is performed in an open stage. It is called as *Maṇḍapa* or *Pālā Maṇḍapa* which is the modern name of traditional word *Raṅgamañca*. Traditionally this Maṇḍapa was built with mud and the roof of this is covered with the bough of cocoanut and bamboos. But in modern era it is covered with colorful cloths etc. In old Odishan culture before preparing stages for the performance of *Pālā* a ritual customary was strictly followed & it was based on *Nāṭyaśāstra*. But now-a-days it is not followed strictly. Again as per the suggestion of *Nāṭyaśāstra* square size *Pālā Maṇḍapas* are prepared for *Pālā*.

From the time immemorial of the worship of the Lord *Satyanārāyaṇa* is being observed in this holy land of Utkal. By the study of "*Skanda Purāṇa*" (*Revākhaṇḍa*), it is found that the merits of the worship of *Satyanārāyaṇa* are vividly presented here. As depicted in the mythologies, Lord *Satyanārāyaṇa* Himself told Nārada' about this worship and 'Nārada' described it before the saints living in the forest of Naimiśā. So as this belief a proper place for *LordSatyanārāyaṇa* is given on the one side of *Pālā Maṇḍapa* with ritualistic approach. Before entering to stage all the *Pālā* artists pay homage to Lord *Satyanārāyaṇa*.

In a *Pālā* performance, songs of various type in different styles predominance the dance which on the other hand, is the expression of simple rhythm to the tune of music. *Pālā* is normally ritualistic in character and is performed on the occasion of worship of *Satyanārāyaṇa*. But now-a-days it is performed on important festive occasions. The performers, be it in an urban area or in the folk area, draws a large audience. The interesting theme of *Pālā*, the lyrical diction of the poets exhibited in a charming manner in melodious voice, the songs of humor with the use of local dialects and various dresses, the depiction of humorous story, the

skillful play of *Mṛdaṅga*, the charming and colourful dress of *Gāyaka Bāyaka* and *Pāliās* make the audience spellbound. The artists wear a typical type of Saries or long dhootis.

The leader of the *Pālā* group, who is dressed in very differently and wearing many ornaments, very big ear rings and necklaces etc. is called*Gāyaka*or *Gāhāṇa* and he is accompanied by a band of four or five accompanists and amongst them one is the *'Śiri Pāliā'* or chief-co-singer..Before the entrance of *Gāyaka* to stage the drummer or *Bāyaka* plays on the *Mṛdaṅga*. Here the drummer displays his utmost artistic quality both with theory and practice. The figures of the drummer talks like man. Here the drummer utters many principles of music from various Sanskrit texts like *Saṅgītaratnākara, Tālamṛdaṅgavādya, Nāṭyaśāstra* etc.

In performance of *Pālā* the *'Gāhāṇa'* or the main singer is accompanied by a band of four or five accompanists and amongst them one is the *'Śiri Pāḻiā'* or chief-co-singer. The main singer narrates the story. He usually does not play any instrument, but holds a *'Cāmara'* of fly whisker, which is used in worshiping. *'Mṛdaṅga'* - an oval shaped hollow clay instrument covered by the skin of goat in its two narrow ends, *'Kaṃsāḻa'* - a pair of plate like brass instrument; are used in *Pālā* as main instruments.

At the time of worship of Satyanārāyaṇa*Gāyaka* play small bell metal cymbals (Gini) which are connected with long connecting rope, along with various mantras. Afterward he prepares benediction or the *Purbaraṅga*. The "initials" or the *Purbaraṅga* of a*Pālā* play has a lot of similarity with that of the *Purbaraṅga*mentioned in Nāṭyaśāstra.No other form of play production exists today which adheres so much to the formalities as per the Nāṭyaśāstraas that of a *Pālā* play of Odisha. This justifiably signifies the classical origin of this beautiful form of mass communication media of Odisha. After benediction *Gāyaka* generally perform their show explaining an episode, a chapter from the Epics, folk tales of Odiā & Sanskrit literature. He always sings the song by waving the *'Cāmara'*(whisk), sometimes with a small stick. *'Śiripāliā'* is the main person who repeats the stanzas of *Gāyaka*. He works as a main supporter of the leader of the *Pālā* Group. Depth of knowledge, sharpness of intelligence, oratory and keen memory power are put to severe test when two well matched groups challenge each other in a *Pālā*competition. Nothing but unreserved admiration is due to the singers for their in exhaustible energy to continue the competition every night stretching over a month. The drummer displays the skill of his fingers and relates humorous stories to please the audience. The dialogue between the singer and one of the attendances breaks the monotony of long speeches and jugglery of words in the song. *Pālā* owes its origin to attempt at Hindu-Muslim unity. *Pālā*as a traditional media of communication is very much popular in almost all parts of rural Odisha excluding few interior pockets. *Pālā*is an important cultural performance responsible for popularization of ancient literature. The drummer plays on the *Mṛdaṅga*. Others play cymbals, and help the chief singer. *Gāyaka*is to sing and explain the meaning to the audience. While singing songs the side singers sing loudly by pressing one hand in their ears.

Usually these forms of ballad singing are closely associated with postnatal rituals of Odishan society. On the 21st day of the birth of a child when the naming ceremony is observed, the head of the family invites a group of *Pālā* singers and request them to perform. *Satyapīra* is worshired in this occasion. *Satyapīra* worship is developed in both Bengal, and Odisha during the time of around 17th century, during Muslim reign. *Satyapīra* is the God who is both Satyanārāyaṇa and *'Pīr'- 'Pīr'* means an old person or a preceptor who founded a Muslim religious sect in Persian. *Satyapīra*- described by Kabi Karṇa in his sixteen texts on *Satyapīra's* achievements.

Sometimes during the naming ceremony of a new born on 21st day of the birth, another kind of *Pālā 'Ṣaṭhīpālā'* is performed in northern part of Odisha. This *Pālā* is about the folk goddess 'Ṣaṭhī*Devī*' or 'Ṣaṭhī*Devī*' and her role in the life of a child. The mother of the new born keeps the penance: the *Pālā* goes on overnight and a figure of *Devī*Ṣaṭhī was drawn on the wall with oil, vermilion, turmeric paste and *'Kauḍi'*, a kind of conch shell.

These groups singing ballads of Odisha are very popular and all time favorite among the Odisha folk. First of all, the performance is musical. The ballad is sung using various *'Rāgas'* and *'Rāgiṇīs'* of the musical notes. These make the whole performance rhythmical and musical. Instruments are also played significant role.

Types of Ballads - In Odisha we find so many popular ballads. According to nature and structure we may categories these ballads into two main categories. They are- (a) oral transmitted ballads and (b) written ballads. Let us discuss it.

     *(a) Oral Transmitted Ballads-*Most of the ballad examples in ancient times used to be passed to the next generation through oral traditions. This is because there was no language in which to write them down. Such types of ballads usually use the common dialect of the people and are heavily influenced by the region in which they originate. Such type of ballads are also associated with some rituals, history, myths, societies, particular persons or events etc.. We are unable to trace out the authors of such types of ballads, because it was transmitted orally generation to generation. These ballads are migratory in character as they travel from place to place with the itinerary performers or bards- they are dynamic in nature as they grow vibrantly through the ages. Again in some cases we find some ascribed authors also. In some cases particularly in some occasions it is created instantly. Due toits oral transmitted quality, regular poetic rules are not applicable for them. The bowl songs, songs of mendicants by a particular string instrument i.e., *'kenderā'*, the instant composed songs by the artists of *Pālā*, *Dāsakāṭhia* etc. are the examples of oral transmitted ballads. Even few years back *'All Indian Radio'*, Cuttack has been broadcasting so many popular ballads in their programmes. One of them is-

कथाटिए कहुँ ।(I would like to tell a story.)

कि कथा ?(Whichstory ?)

वेङ्गुलि कथा ।(Story of a lady frog.)

कि वेङ्गुलि ?(Whichlady frog?)

काठ वेङ्गुली ।(Wood lady frog.)

कि काठ ?(Which wood?)

तेलि माठ ।(Meadow of a Oilman.)

कि तेलि ?(Which Oilman?)

घणा पेलि ।((Who) runs a pressing machine.)

कि घणा ?(Which pressing machine ?)

आखु घणा ।(Pressing machine of sugar cane.)

कि आखु ?(Which sugar cane ?)

कन्तारि आखु ?(*Kantāri* sugar cane.)

कि कन्तारि ?(Which *Kantāri* ?)

वुढी मन्तारी ।(Old lady minister.)

किवुढी ?(Which old lady ?)

कोतरी वुढी ।(Dirty old lady.)

कि कोतरी ?(Which dirty ?)

हेंस मुतुरी ।(Pissing in the mat.)

कि हेंस ?(Which mat ?)

डेणा हंस ?(Wing swan.)

कि डेणा ?(Which wing ?)

खण्ड चणा ।(Part of *caṇā* dal.)

कि खण्ड ?(Which part ?)

मिरिग नण्ड ।(Ordure of deer.)

कि मिरिग ?(Which deer ?)

झाड मिरिग ।(Deer of forest.)

कि झाड ?(Which forest ?)

कण्टा वाड ।(Fence of thorn.)

कि कण्टा ?(Which thorn ?)

कानकोलि कण्टा ।(The thorn of *Kānakoḻi*.)

कलि लागिथिए झटापटा ।((Where) severe quarrel occurs.)

     It was very much popular at that time. In this way the songs sang at the time of *Kumārapūrṇimā*, *Raja* festival, daughter's marriage, sad demise of somebody etc. are the examples of this type. No one is the claimed author of such type of ballads. These are the folk ballads of oral transmitted type.

(b) Written Ballads-Here we should note that ballad may be traced back to the ancient *'bolis'* (narration) &c.. These *'bolis'*(For example, *'Sāma Dīrgha Boli'* &c.) were composed in a single rhythm, in simple language to narrate some particular important incidents from *puraṇic* literature &c.. These*'bolis'* were meant to be sung and the *yogīs*, the wandering mendicants of Odisha, used to sing these *'bolis'* while begging for alms.Again *'Poi'* (For example, *'Paciśapoi'*&c.), *'Buli'* (For example, *'Saja Buli'.* Here the benefit of morning walk is explained here.) etc. are the folk ballads. In many cases no one is the celebrated author of such types of ballads. But sometimes it is ascribed to somebody. Again sometimes we find some authors were created such type of ballads.Amongst such type of ballads,some of the important *'bolis'* are mentioned below.

      (1) Daśa boli : It was composed by *Nrisingh Bhramaravara* in ten verses, and it narrated events from *Kṛṣṇa*'s birth to *Kaṃsa*'s death.

      (2) Akrura boli : It was composed by *Govinda Das*, and it narrated *Akrura'*s arrival to fetch *Kṛṣṇa* and the death of *Kaṃsa*.

      (3) Kacha boli: It was composed by *Mahadeva Das*, who portrayed *Kṛṣṇa*'s disguises as a bangle-seller.

      (4) Viśikesana boli: It was composed by *Kesava Das*, & narrated the story of *Karṇa* offering meals to *Viṣṇu* with the flesh of his son *Viśikesana* and *Viśikesana*'s subsequent return to life.

      (5) Mukutā boli: It was composed by an anonymous poet and narrated the conversation between *Mukutā*, the queen of Bengal, and prince *Govinda*, her son and the queen's insistent desire to make her son a yogi.

      Apart from these there were other ballads or *bolis* which were composed in the past to teach religious ethics to the students. Such ballads following the pattern of Sanskrit texts like the *Hitopadeśa*, *Pancatantra*etc. where animals were taken as principal characters, were *Karkaṭa Boli* (The narration of the Crab), *Sṛgāla boli* (The narration of the Jackal), *Mṛguṇī Stuti* (The Prayer of the Deer), etc.

Central Theme of the *Oḍiā* Ballads -So far as the theme is concerned, many of the ballads in *Oḍiā* were religious and hey narrated and described religious events or such events and accounts that had religious motivations or directions. Such a ballad, &quite a popular one, was *Deuḷatoḷā* (Building of the Temple), which was about Lord *Jagannath*& His temple at *Puri*& was probably composed in the 18th century. Some trace the source of the poem to the *Mahābhārata* of*Sarala Dasa* as probable writers. Other ballads having religious content are various*Brata Kathās, Oṣā Kāhāṇīs*which are usually sung by virgins, married ladies & widowed women, either individually or collectively, with a view to bring good to themselves or to other members of the family on the occasions of ritual worships inside the family. The stories are about the gods and the poems sing the gods' glory that is expected to bless the devotees and punish the unfaithful. Sometimes the gods are described with all human weakness. Thus *Jagannath* in the *Dhānamāṇika Oṣā*, *Sūrya* in the *Rabinārāyaṇa Brata,* etc. have been punished for their mistakes. In a way these poems give a good insight into Odisha's rich cultural heritage. Again the story of jealousy and quarrel in rich and established families can be seen as themes of many ballads like *Sādhava Jhia, Santosīmā Brata Kathā,* etc..*ṬīkāGovinda Candra* is another popular religious balled. The poet *Yasovanta Das* (16th century) has given a complete shape to various earlier folk-songs.

Recent Trends in Ballad-writing Tradition in Odisha -If the balled is taken only as a poetic form, many comparatively recent writers will be found to have written ballads on various themes.Nandakisore Bala (1875-1928), the poet and novelist, also wrote good ballads and they were collected in his poetical volume *Prabhāta Saṁgīta* (Songs of Dawn). *Chintamani Mohanty* (1867-1944), a prolific poet, wrote ballads in blank verse which were included in his book *Prītilekhas* (1918). *Godavarish Mishra* (1886-1956) earned fame by composing ballads in melodious haunting rhyme. *Ālekhikā* (The Portraits, 1923) was his first published ballad-collection. It was a collection of ten ballads from popular *Oḍiā* legends. Similarly his other books *Kiśalaya* (The Bud, 1922) and *Vitāyana* (1953) include many ballads. The novel presentation of the stories in each ballad made them very popular. Structurally they had a quick tempo, had elements of suspense and drama, and though their moods were at times melancholic, the endings were often pleasant. The poems conveyed strong emotions in musical setting and colloquial language.

     Radhamohan Godanayak (born on 1911) has probably become most famous among the contemporary poets as a ballad writer. He has popularized ballads as an important branch of *Oḍiā* poetry by composing more than fifty ballads. Some of these like *Viśva Jīvan Pathe. Visarjana, Prabhāvatira Aviyāna, Maṇikāñcanayoga* etc.are ballads based on Indian history. His ballad collection *Paśupakṣīra Kāvya* (the Poetry of Animals and Birds, 1959) has several ballads composed on the legends from the lives of different

animals and birds, taken from mythological, historical, as well as realistic sources. The dramatic presentation of the story in a powerful moving language, and with natural expression of emotions makes *Gadanayak* eminently successful as a balled-poet.

There are many other ballads too which have not been listed here. Balled-writing, though not as important as composing lyrical, personal poems, continues to be an important and popular branch in contemporary *Oḍiā* poetry.

Again various *cautiśās* are the emblem of Odishan ballads.*Cautiśā* is a ballad, the stanzas of which, or couplets, are arranged according to the letters of the alphabet. In *Cautiśā* the first letter of the first two or four lines must begin with *'Ka'*, the first consonant of the *Oḍiā* alphabet, the lines in the second couplet or stanza begin with *'Kha'*, the second letter of the alphabet and so on till to the last letter, *'Kṣa'*.The earliest Chautisā is the *Kalasa Cautiśā*of *Bachha Das*. It is supposed to be referred to by *Sarala Dasa* in his *Mahābhārata* about a century later. The *Kalasa Cautiśā*is a panegyric to *Śiva*. It consists of 34 stanzas, written in the alphabetic order of a *Cautiśā*. The diction of this *Cautiśā* is indeed archaic. That gives the piece the halo of supposed antiquity, but the performance is, on the whole, interesting.

Subjective/ThematicDivision of Ballads -Various scholarscollected, classified and studied ballads along with other forms of Oral literature according to their theme or subject. The subjective division of ballads by Dr. Kunjabehari Das, the pioneer folklorist of Odisha is - (a) Religious Ballads, (b) Ballads of Complaint, (c) Elegiac Ballad, (d) Ballads on Marriages, (e) Miscellaneous[2]. Again his contemporary Chakradhara Mohapatra has divided ballads into three groups - (a) Ballads rendering the lament of a mother or daughter on later marriage, (b) Ballads of suffering or bride, (c) Religious ballads[3]. These classifications are based on the thematic variations.So from the above discussion we can safely say that*Oḍiā* ballads thematically may be divided into seven types. They are-(a) Social Ballads, (b) Historical Ballads, (c) Mythological Ballads, (d) Devotionals Ballads, (e) Festive Ballads, (f) Love Ballads and (g) Lament Ballads.

Culmination - Whatever it may be,ballad singing is a rich and living tradition of Odisha. In a multi-cultural state like Odisha, ballads are sung in varied forms and the Odishan culture has its indigenous form of ballad singing.

Foot Notes

1. *For more see Purṇṇacandra Oḍiā bhāṣākos'a, Vol.-1, Introduction.*
2. Das. K.B., *Oḍiā Lokagīta O Kāhāṇī* (Oriya Folk Songs and Tales), 1958. P. 66.
3. Mohapatra, Chakradhara, *Utkala Gāuṅligītī* (Folk Songs of Utkal). 1959.

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