

Performing-art Khuliya-bhauriya: A minute observation

Dr. Tridib Kr. Goswami

SeniorAsst. Professor, Dept. of English, Batadraba S.S.S College
Nagaon: Assam

Submitted: 01-07-2022

Revised: 10-07-2022

Accepted: 13-07-2022

Khuliya-bhauriya is a living performing art-form of Assam. It is found prevalent in the newly established Darrang district and East-kamrup of the Kamrup district. The art-form is also found in some places of Nalbari and Barpeta district. In many respects it has similarity with Biah –Ojapali. According to the active bearers, the origin of the art-form lies in the Biah-Ojapali tradition. Khola was played in Darrang district many years before Sankaradeva and Khuliya-bhauriya is still accepted both by the Saktas and the Neo-Vaisnavas.

Khuliya-bhauriya is a coined word, Khuliya means one who plays the khola and bhauriya means one who acts. So Khuliya-bhauriya is such a person, who can play the khola and can act the role of any mythical or non-mythical character.

The themes of Khuliya-bhauriya are always taken from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Among them, the popular themes are---Ravana Vadha, Sita-Harana, Kishak-Vadha, Abhimainyu-Vadha, Kumor-Haran etc. The significant characters reflected through the art-form are-Rama, Laxmana, Bharata, Dasaratha, Ravana Koushyala, Sita, Pancha-pandavas, Dourpadi and Kunti etc.

There is a Oja character in the art-form who is a director as well as a singer. The people involved in this art-form can be divided into two groups---one group includes 20-25 bhauriyas while the other includes two pali, two Tala-badakas and six Khuliyas. The art-form starts with the beating of the kholas and talas and this is known as Khola-ghata. After this, Oja appears, dances and sings a song invoking Vishnu:

O hari pravu basudeva narayan
Bandim moi krishnare sarane
Prathamate bandu ami mau Saraswati
Tar pace bandu ami Laxmipati
Ganeshaka banu Gourir Sarane

Pranam koru siva Sanatana

The characters of Khuliya-bhauriya appears before the audience with dance movements supported by khola-tala. Generally it is seen that war themes are frequently presented through this art-form and tragic environment is created. On the otherhand, it is also observed that in the midst of such scene, a clown like character i.e. Bahua appears and creates laughter. For instance, the following lines can be mentioned:

Suna bhai muhur bilai
Ghar-girasthi sudha kaila tinita tirie pai
.....
.....
Sarughainir etai loran am tar banei
Puwa godhuli santi nidie, gofat dhari
tanei

Like the beginning of the art-form, it concludes with a prayer song which is sung by the oja and repeated by the palis:

Diha: aparadha khyama kora narayana amar
Pada: ki diya pujibo hari charane tomar
Sewate santostwa hoiba sanmandhe amar
hastedi pujibo hari siu thake karmakari
mondi pujibo pravu nubule hari

Like Ankiya-bhaona or Pala-bhaona, Khuliya-bhauriya starts inbetween 9-10 pm and continues upto the dawn. The dress and make-up of the bhauriyas are fabricated with local colours which are made of turmeric, Puroi-sak, Rice-powder etc. In this performance, mask plays a significant role. Besides this, the characters of this art-form use Dhanu-kar, Goda, Jathi etc. The art-

form is performed in open field and co-acting is not a important part of this art-form.

By passing time, the art-form faces obstacles as the new generation is not interested in such performance. But for its traditional value as a folk-art-form, it must occupy its place in future as before.

CONSULTED SOURCES:

- [1]. Jogesh Das:Folklore of Assam,NBT 3RD EDN. NewDelhi,2005
- [2]. B.N.Datta:A study of the Folk culture of the Goalparia Region of Assam. G.U,1995
- [3]. Nabin Ch. Sarma:Traditional and Folk dramas of Assam,1998SSKS,Guwahati.
- [4]. Satyendra Nath Sarma:A Socio-economic and Cultural History of Medieval Assam,1989
- [5]. Tridib kr.. Goswami: A Comparative Studyofthe Pala-art-form of Assam and Orissa,Ph.d thesis,G.U.,2009.