

Jagannath Consciousness (Chetna) in Assamese devotional folksong

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Abstract

Assam is rich repository of folklore materials. Assamese folksong is highly rich, because it covers our divers of feelings, imagination power, our customs, our joy-sorrow and also rules and regulations from womb to tomb. Devotional folksong is a part of institutional folksong. Assamese devotional folksongs are very pleasant. The song of Lord Jagannath has been sung to have peace within people. People also believe that by singing Lord Jagannath's song they can have eternal happiness in heaven. The Lord Jagannath's songs are mainly sung in lower sides of Assam.

Key word

Devotional folksong, Chetna(Consciousness), Lord Jagannath.

INTRODUCTION :

Assam is one of the foremost states of the North-East. Like all other six states of the area it is a rich repository of folklore materials. The state is surrounded by national and international territory in its borders. It is bounded by royal kingdom of Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh, formerly known as NEFA on the north; Nagaland and Manipur, two highly states with diverse ethnic on the east, Mizoram and Tripura on the south and in the south-west Meghalaya and Bangladesh and West Bengal on the west.

The state of Assam has had many aspects of historical and geographical significances. The state owns historical antiquity since the time of Mahabharata and even beyond that. Earlier, Assam was known by the names of Pragjyotish and Kamrup.

According to Alan Dundes, the term 'Folk' can refer to any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor. (Essays in Folkloristic that is transmitted traditionally either by words of mouth or by customs and practices.

Assamese society has witnessed many ups and downs in culture lineages. The folklore materials of Assam have acquired some distinctive characteristics. Folk literature or verbal art is a part of folk literature. Assamese folk song is highly rich, because it covers our divers of feelings, imagination power, our customs, legends, general people's simple way of thinking, our joy-sorrow, fame-devotion, faith-tradition and also rules and regulations from womb to tomb. Assamese devotional folk songs are very pleasant and Lord Jagannath's songs are mainly sung in lower side of Assam.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECT :

The origins of the worship of Lord Jagannath and temple dedicated to him in Jagannath Puri are lost in the sands of history. The devotee Hindu devotee believes that Lord Jagannath is eternal. The origins of Jagannath we have found two versions – one is the popular legends based on Puranas and Folklore and the other is the statements of the scholars who have tried to collate evidences from known history, archeology and ancient literature to draw surmises about the history and the origins.

The Bhakti Movement has been started in Dravidan presently known as Tamil Nadu during 8th- 9th century. During this period eighteen poet named as "Aalowar" has become famous for their songs in the name of Lord Bishnu and these songs can be sung by people of all caste and creed. This Bhakti Movement has been spread to North India by Guru Sankaracharya and at last it has been spread all over India. According to Guru Sankaracharya, the Puri Dham has been considered as one among the four pilgrimage of Hindus.

After year Sankaracharya, Guru Ramanujacharya has taken forward all the rules followed by 'Smriti Sastra'. After him Madhavacharya, Sankardeva and many other saints visited Puri Dham. While visiting Puri Dham, Sankardeva met Jagannath Das, a well known Oriya poet and then they decided to translate the holy book of Hindu "The Bhagawat Geeta" in their own language. Sankardeva has written a religious book named "Kirtan". The Kirtan's last part named "Uresha Barnan's" theme is specially collected from jagannath Purana. In this part Sankardeva has written about how to worship the Idol of Lord Krishna Boloram and Subhadra and about the Jagannath Pilgrimage in a beautiful poetic way.

After Sankardeva, Sridhar Kandali, a poet, mentioned that he was written his book "Ghunusa Yatra" by taking help of. Jagannath Purana." i.e. -

Saniyuka Nara huya ekaman I
Jagannath Puranar Kotha bitupan II
Nardor aage jebe brahmaya kathanta I
Jagannath Jatra ghunusar grihata II

A Bangala poet Joydev has written "Geet Govinda" and many other poets after him has taken help of "Geet Govinda" but their main Chetana was Lord Jagannath. Jagannath's Chetana has been brought towards East by Joydev's "Geet Govinda". Anonymous poets says.

The Saint (Panda) of Jagannath visited ancient Kamrup in the mid year of a period and they praised Lord Jagannath in front of all people. Without any visualization of lord Jagannath, the people started believing and wondering Lord automatically. And as a result the people created-

"Hei prabhu Jagannath hei asila pachimar mukhe
Hei Joydevor stuti pai pubmuwa hola jai papik rokhibar mone."

Even though Lord Jagannath was the God of "Sawar" but later on century by century he was worshipped by all religions as for example- Buddha, Sikh, Islam, Saiva, Vaishnava and many others. So, therefore, the people of very religions were treated as equal in front of Lord Jagannath. And for all this reasons Lord Jagannath took place in the heart of the people of Kamrup very easily. Many anonymous poet has created Lord Jagannath's song by taking the help of "Kirtana Gosha's" way. By doing all this the anonymous poets imagination power, trust towards Lord Jagannath has been come into light.

ASSAMESE DEVOTIONAL FOLK SONG :

Devotional folk song is a part of Institutional folk song. This devotional song is sung in religious function. By these songs we can see the picture of trust among the illiterate people of various God and Goddesses. As for example Aainam, Devir nam, Pogala-Parvatir nam, Jagannathr nam, Tulasir tolat gowa nam, opeswra sabahar nam etc.

The Assamese people believe that the goddess Sitala is the main goddesses of the disease pox. Goddesses Sitala has been named as Thakurani in Orissa, Ganga maa in Andhra Pradesh and Marri Amma in Tamil nadu and Sukh Jamma in Karnataka. To cure this disease, people need to satisfy the goddesses Sitala and beyond Hindu religions, the Islamic people have strong believed on this goddess.

The song of Lord Jagannath has been sung to have peace within people. People also believe that by singing Lord Jagannath's song, they can have eternal happiness in Heaven.

JAGANNATH CHETANA IN ASSAMESE DEVOTIONAL FOLK SONG :

Jagannath Dham is one of the sacred and famous pilgrimage in India is situated in Puri, Odisha. This Puri Dham is famous from earlier time onwards and this pilgrimage in meant as a place of all the Saints to meet together in the name of Lord Jagannath. Beyond Joydev's Geet Govinda, Sankardev's 'Kirtan's Uresha Barnan' and the Saints (Panda) of Lord Jagannath has taken place in the heart of common people. As a result the people consider Lord Jagannath as their own folk God.

The people have strong believe that at the first half of a year Lord Jagannath visit villages from Puri to known about his followers. They do believe that during that time if we take the name of Lord Jagannath, Lord Jagannath save them from various diseases and helps them to relief of any disease . Their imagination of anonymous poets that the visit of Lord Jagannath has been described below –

*"Botahu melishi ale fale kori
Kathale Phelshi musji,
Amare ghoruk Jagannath aahishi
Sukula ghurate uthi."*

The visit of lord Jagannath makes them to clean their villages and houses of the villagers and also the saints invited the other people, to take the name of Lord Jagannath. Mainly the young girls, the unmarried girls and also the female follower stands near the road side to plant Tulshi tree or the small banana plant lo take the name of Lord Jagannath under it. The songs are as follows-

*"Kolpuli kalpuli toi bar kulpuli
Aasili oi banor maje
Ami aapi soli tuli loi ahisu
Jagannath sajabo lage*

Again we can see —

*"Aag hate diya jal tulushir pate
Tusta hola mahaaprabhu gopinir sewate. "*

Not only the female followers but also the male members do have pure trust on Lord Jagannath and the song is as below -

*"Sut dhutikhoni uttari lagun
Haate tulashir mala
Prabhu Jagannathok prathona KArisu
Tini praharang bela."*

Again in the middle of the paddy field, under the Banayan tree the female follower gives Uruli and take the name of Lord Jagannath.

The people who couldn't visit Puri Dham they take the name and worship Lord Jagannath at home by singing song. The song is as follows -

*"Sonai kare jol mol rupai kore ruwa I
Orissar mahaprabhuk ere pora scwa II"*

Lord Jagannath visits the people by looking into their devotee. In some song, it seems that, Lord Jagannath sends its saints (Panda) to take all the good and bad needs of the villagers and this descriptions are as follows-

*"Aadkhani bator pat pandai sudhchi
Raijkan sukhi ne dukhi ?"*

Again according to some other poet, they imagine that Lord Jagannath, himself visits to take the news of the villagers. The description is as follows -

<i>Jagannath aahichi</i>	<i>Batot bohichi</i>
<i>Marichi dharamar Khuti I</i>	
<i>Adha bator pora</i>	<i>sudha pucha kore</i>
<i>Raijkan sukhi ne dukhi II "</i>	

Lord Jagannath has been considered as a homely God for the people. So, in such and every time, they unknowingly take the name of Lord Jagannath -

*"Ratire siyale dinate huwa diye
Rakhya Kara Jagannath*

The people do believe that Lord Jagannath is the owner of their Paragana. So, Lord Jagannath have various fruits, flowers and vegetables in his home, but the villagers take chances in the absence of Lord Jagannath and they tries to take the fruits and vegetables and eat it up. And for this the people wants Lord Jagannath not to blame and punish them for this Sin and says that whole life they will take the name of the Lord Jagannath. In this we need to mention about "Haigriva Madhava's Temple of Kamrup, Hajo. Till today taking the name of Haigriva Madhava, people worship first Lord Jagannath. This proves that Lord Jagannath's Chetana present within us till today.

Again, the poets says that as last year, if Lord Jagannath's saves them from their suffering they will bribe him in return -

*"Jagannath Bolobhadra subhadra goshani I
Ebar Jodi rajok rakha dim tenga kini." II*

In the imagination of anonymous poet, this folk God danced sometimes and sometime he prepared food etc. has been pictured their song.

Although there is a kind of greed within the song is present, still the female follower's simple trust has been put into light.

It is already said in the song that lord Jagannath visits villages to take their news. But, the female followers do not get the religious things to welcome him and worship him. So, they clean Lord Jagannath's feet by their hair and also they allow Lord Jagannath to pass through their body. This things has been sung like —

*“Jagannath ahichi batote raichi
Dibare naika eku;
Mathare keshedi charan majilu
Jiur (dehar) pari dilu saku.”*

Krishna Janmmashtami is an annual Hindu festival that celebrates the birth of Krishna, the eight avatar of Lord Vishnu. On the occasion of Janammashami festival, the every people of Assam sung a very popular folk song where the Lord Krishna is depicts as Lord Jagannath. The song is as follows-

Aji rati sila barashile
nushuni prajare mat ,
Pali pohoriya sobe nidra gailo
upojile jagannath.

Lord Jagannath bless us to live people In heaven without any pain and suffering and any punishment has been considered and must by people; because Lord Jagannath is also the owner of heaven.

CONCLUSION

Lord Jagannath Chetana is present till today. At earlier time there was no men such well and easy communication from Kamrup to Odisha but, still the followers as much as they can try to visit on foot . People believe that once in a life visit the Puri Dham(Jagannath Temple) makes peoples life fulfill. This proves that Lord Jagannath's Chatana is present in the heart of each and every people of Assam.

Century by century Lord Jagannath has been worshipped by people and Lord Jagannath has been proved as a symbol of equality.

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