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# Educative Medium of Entertainment in Odisha: ‘Pala’ A Case Study

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**Abstract:** *The folk culture of Odisha has been refined a lot by various performing folk art conventions. Pala is one of the distinctive especial unique traditions of odisha’s folk culture. The antiquity of his beginning is yet to be unfurl. Pala performance motivates people to have proclivity towards God and religion. The Pala has been familiar, well-received and educative medium of entertainment for the people of Odisha. Pala is a pleasure, gratification of Odisha considered and admired by the people. In this paper I focused the reach tradition of pala, its social and literary value.*

**Keywords:** *folk culture, pala, performance, pleasure, educative medium.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Pala absorbs an extremely exceptional position in the compound mosaic of Odisha’s performing arts. It shares valid aspects with the other forms of folk performing arts such as Leela, Suanga, and Jatra etc like them. Pala adopts classically, scholarly literary themes, fables, narratives and episodes to captivate observers and is an amalgam of story-telling through melody, harmony, *Kavya* and melodramatic performance described to clutch the vision of the on lookers. But, in further, pala is familiarly associated, on the one hand, to a mode of sacred ritual, and religious worship practiced in medieval Orissa and on the other to the highbrow sophistication of the pundits and intellectuals proficient in the Sanskrit ethic of the *puranas* and extra literary works.

### A. Aspects of Pala

On the point of performing Art, Pala crop up from the honor of the five deities: *Ganesh, Vishnu, Durga, Shiva* and *Bhaskar* (the sun God). The chief among the five songsters came to be popular as *gayakas*, although the other four were entitled as *Palias* (exactly meaning, those who conjoin in the chorus of musical piece). They used to be decorated in the conventional *odissi* style of the time, Which contained an *Odissi* type of *pugree* on the head, a ‘*dhoti*’ used in the mode of the Oriya paikas and a high sparkling and usually colorful grown going down well under the knees. A pricey ‘*Chadar*’ capped the neck and the shoulders; earrings, bracelets and armlets were also worn. The apparel was thus practically aristocratic in style. They would sing to the adjunct of *ramtali* (two segments of symmetrical and ornamental wood which beat against each other and create a rhythmic sound), *mridanga* and cymbals and they wore *nupurs* round the ankles.

On a low wooden table popularly known as *asthana* (seat) shield with a coloured piece of cloth, were placed (on betel leaves) five sets of ripe bananas with the skin rind off, each set stands for one deity. Acknowledgement to each of the deities was quoted by the *gayaka*. The spot where the *asthana* was putdown was regularly consecrate by *Panchamruta*. This traditional worship was take the place of *pala* proper, especially the recitation of a story or a theme.



(Pala gayaka Abhiram Satapathy) Ph.D. Scholar of Ravenshaw University, Roll no- 002, 2017-18

### B. Pala In Odia Literature

In Odisha, sixteen palas are afforded to the deities to satisfy the gods, to ward off a few individual tragedies or in fulfillment of a promise. If an incurable child lies dying, his mother or grandparents may promise to have sixteen palas or twelve palas, spreading over as many years, as a contribution to assure that the child is relieved by the mercy of God. If the desire is fulfilled palas are staged annually for the authorized number of years on a specified favorable day. There is sizeable documentation to show that (until about the seventeenth century) pala narration was constricted to royal courts as a form of artistic taste, classically literary amusement combined with sacred worship or to exclusive homely households for the Privileged ambition of religious worship. In the by gone time the pala gayaka presented his ability of the Vedas, upanishadas the Sanskrit classics and the Oriya Ramayana and Mahabharata in the performance of the theme. In most cases, the story component in a Pala oration was narrow and the wadding was implemented by deviations into supplementary themes, connected chapters or episodes or literary frame-references.

In ancient time the repository of an knowledgeable palagayaka kept on developing early it was the Vedas and the Upanishads, the sacred texts and the puranas; next the Sanskrit literary classics were combined; furthermore the works of Upendra Bhanja; the majesty of Odia Riti Kavya; of Kabibara Radganatha Roy, the first poet of modern age; the works of that tremendous craftsman of language, Dinakrushna Das, Abhimanyu samantsinghara, Kavisurya Baladeba Rath of medieval age and Gangadhar Meher of modern age. Among these authors Upendra Bhanja's Vaidehisha Bilasha, Subhadra Parinya, Gangadhar meher's TapaswAni, PranyaBallari, Kichakabatha and Indumati were generally well received.

About 17<sup>th</sup> century, the poet Kabikarna composed a number of palas categorically signifies for recitation in a supernatural context. Kabi karna's life and times need more research have not been discussed fully but it is broadly acknowledged that he belongs to the later part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and in the beginning of 18<sup>th</sup> century. This was a period when polity and society in Odisha and Bengal were subjected to rapid transformations.



(Pala gayaka Abhiram Satapathy and his team in dressing room)



(Pala gayaka and research scholar Abhiram Satapathy perform pala in a function organized by Odisha sahitya Academy)

### C. Pala 'mixture of Hindu and Muslim Culture'

The Muslim encroachment of Bengal and Orissa provoked some well-known authors to compose what they thought and their luxurious life style must be reflected in literature. They also try to create a new path for bringing united the Muslim and Hindu cultures and forms of worship. For example; 'Satyanarayan Pala'. Narayana or Vishnu, the controlling deity of pala was alike from satyapira who was an epitome, a pious Muslim saint or fakir. This optimism was especially powerful in Bengal where satyanarayana panchali appears to be recognized with pala and also assimilated in it themes connecting to the culmination of Satyapira. Panchamruta was swelled to contained 'Sirini', a mixture prepares with ripe banana, milk, flour, molasses etc.. In AD 1568, Odisha came under the Muslim rule of the sultans of Bengal. Mansingh, the capable general of Emperor Akbar, assaulted Odisha and the Moghul armies settled their camps in different parts of Odisha. At that predicament disturbed period Kabi Karna who appears to have popular both in Odisha and Bengal, and composed sixteen palas, each palas elaborated the power, the importance, the grandeur of satyapira through a story. For example, Satyapira himself come into sight in mask as an old man before a wealthy merchant and suggests him to afford worship of Satyapira. The merchant laughs ha-ha at the old man and his Zenith of Satyapira. He provoked the extreme hanger of Satyapira and is diminished to beggary. Then he understands his disgrace and apologizes for his misbehave by organizing satyapira pala. Thereafter, he is released from the emanation of Sacrilege; this is indistinguishable with the point of the Mahima of Satyanarayana.

### D. Pala Palmleaf Manuscript In Odisha State Museum

The Odisha state Museum has, however, a total number of 29 palm-leaf manuscripts of Pala. Some of these are composed to more than one poet. Such as satyanarayan janma pala has three contrasting version and these are by Kabikarna, Dwija Bishwanatha, Shankara Acharya, Kabi Karna's language is a distinct combination of Oriya and Bengali. Some of the coequals of Kabikarna have composed pala in Odia language. among them, Dwija Biswanath, Bhugurama and Shankara Acharya are well known.

The gayaka was a intellectual for he had to look back all the citations, brainstorm and initiate a number of appropriate texts to outline the points and metaphors through the ability of consortium.

Pala thus comprised not only a huge body of traditional and contemporary, well liked and patronized literature but through its audio-visual performance assist in their development and admiration. Literature outstretch the common mans formal illiterates though this procedure. Being a classical-folk sequence. Pala Synthesize the literary contexts, the awareness segment, the formalization of important classic kavyas, the alankaras, sequences, rural comedy, portraitures, sometimes surrounding on Vulgarity and indecorous sayings, myths and byword proverbs.

The correspondence between the gayaka and the palia assits the conjunction of folk and exclusive traditions.

## II. CONCLUSION

It is also encouraging to note that prominence is put down by the learned informed educated gayakas on the classical qualities of Pala, ragas and Layas, performance or acting interpretation with contemporary socially applicable examples. This indicates well for the future maturation of a classical traditional literary performing art shape, synthesizing oral history, rich heritage and contemporary society.

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