



**ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER**

**Arts**

**ABHINAYA IN UPENDRA BHANJA'S LITERATURE**

**KEY WORDS:** Upendra Bhanja, Odia literature, Odissi dance, Abhinaya

**Bidya Biswajeeta** Faculty of Arts, Communication & Indic Studies, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha

**Ratikant Mohapatra** Faculty of Arts, Communication & Indic Studies, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha

**ABSTRACT**

This paper delves into the profound influence of Upendra Bhanja on Odia literature and Odissi dance. Bhanja's poetic compositions, renowned for their musicality and emotive depth, serve as pillars of Odia literary tradition, reflecting the essence of classical Indian culture. Particularly, his works resonate within the Abhinaya aspects of Odissi dance, offering rich thematic material for performers. Through poems like "Koti Bramhanda Sundari" and "Baidehisa Bilasa," Bhanja's exploration of Sringara Rasa evokes timeless themes of love and devotion, akin to Jayadeva's Geeta Govinda. His literary craftsmanship, comparable to classical Sanskrit works, has earned him widespread acclaim. Moreover, Bhanja's interdisciplinary influence extends beyond literature, enriching various art forms. As a result, his legacy persists as a cornerstone of Odia cultural heritage, inspiring creativity and resonating with audiences across generations.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Everywhere there is change. It is the law of nature. Change is inevitable, but the basic ethos on which the society has been built over centuries cannot be forgotten due to negligence or nepotism. But we have to accept this changing concept in order to accelerate the pace of science and technology. So, the structure content and techniques of odia literature must undergo revolutionary change to meet the demand of society. Keeping in pace with this theory of evolution the customs and traditions of odia literature and culture have made way for upgradation. The uniqueness of Odia language in being only seventh ancient classical language of the country out of 100 other languages lies in its basic literature. In this such to maintain this special status of language, the one person whose contribution has been immense and impactful is Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja [1].

Poets are born, not made. If they are made, they are not poets as told by many poets and scholars in odia literature. In the literary firmament of Odisha, Upendra Bhanja shines as the brightest luminary. His acrobatic performances in words are wonderful. True to the tradition of the Sanskrit poetics, Upendra Bhanja wrote his poems where we find ornamental display of words along with lucid expression of finer feelings. Kabi Samrat was consider as the greatest poet of odia literature and awarded 'Kabi Samrat' -The Emporer of Poets. Born in a royal family, Upendra Bhanja has never eyed for throne. Being honourably entitled as 'Kabi Samrat' by the elight of his time, he keeps up a literary heritage as unique as that up homer, Kalidas or Shakespear [2].

**Upendra Bhanja's Impact on Odissi Dance:**

Most of the poetic compositions by Upendra Bhanja are full of musical graces. These ae found in his poems "Koti Bramhanda Sundari", "Baidehisa Bilasa". Poetry as a retrospective reflection of life has always occupied a special place in the classical India mind. To enter the secret recesses of Upendra Bhanja's imagination and to capture the essence of his mood through the language of gesture is the challenge for the dancer in Abhinaya. Particularly in most aspects of Bhanja literature, the role of Nayaka and Nayika are intimately connected with Odissi dance. His works have an immense potential to be included in to the Abhinaya aspects of the Odissi repertoire. Bhanja's poetic expressions has been used widely in odissi dance [3]. Because Upendra Bhanja is perfect in creating and describing beauty with the help of words. He uses various poetic devices- metaphor, initiation, smile, personification, imagery, allusion and many more. It is well known fact that Abhinaya in Odissi dance is the art of expression. More accurately it means leading an audience

towards the experience of a sentiment. It is dramatic piece where mudras, Facial expression and body movement, language are to be describe. The expression of thought is always through some form of language. If proper is not found, the language acts as an obstacle to the expression of thought. This has happened in art literature which play an important role in Odissi dance.

The bulk of Bhanjian syllabus renders more of auditory charm and pleasures to the readers then visual and such occupies the foremost position in contemporary odia poetry of "The Riti Yuga". The passage quoted from Bhanja must be read in proper odia accent, pronunciation and rhythmic refrains in order to comprehend and enjoy the lyric qualities present in his poetry [4].

Upendra Bhanja wrote innumerable musical compositions, most of which are today recited by singers and dancers in programmes in Odissi tradition and Odissi music institutions. In fact, he wrote, in many of his kavyas, that in Odia he would excel the styles and range of the classical Sanskrit works. Indeed, he achieved this with a success that has no parallel in the entire literary world of odia language. Each of his literary works was not only a masterpiece but also comparable to the best ones in Sanskrit and other languages of India [5]. The poetic creations of Upendra Bhanja have taken a special place in the hearts and minds of millions of people. The literary ornaments, the rhythmic vibrations, wonderful jugglery of words and the soothing musical tunes, together have made him an unparalleled poet, Upendra Bhanja in all his epicl compositions has not only shown the ornate style but also distinctly portrayed the emotions, feelings and sentiments mankind.

Dance is one of the best forms of expression. India is blessed with many dance forms; each one is more beautiful than other. One such form is Odissi. The classical Indian dance style is the traditional dance of Odisha. India's culture heritage is incomplete if one cannot point out its reach resources of dance either of classical dance or folk dance. Dance is powerful impulse but the art of dance is that impulse channelled by skilful performers into something that becomes intensely impressive and that may delight spectators who feel no wish to dance themselves. The two concepts of the art of dance – dance as a powerful impulse and dance as skilfully choreographed, act practised largely by a professional few- are the two important connecting ideas running through any consideration of the subject. In dance, the connection between the two concepts is stronger than in some other arts, and neither can exist without the other.

Therefor Abhinaya has also its roots in Odissi dance unlike other classical dances [6].

**Significance of Abhinaya:**

In the theory of drama, there is Abhinaya. It is possible for a man to enact the role of someone else because his own role is also imposed on him; he can identify himself with another role. Therefore, Bharatamuni has used the word Abhinaya in the context of drama. Abhinaya is the back of something that is conveyed [7]. It is the art of expression in Indian aesthetics. More accurately it means leading an audience towards the experience of a sentiment. It is dramatic piece where mudras, facial expressions and body movement or body language are to described. It is well-known fact that the Indian dramatic art theory came to light while developing the stage as performance. This is nothing but Abhinaya of stage drama [8]. This stage drama has several dimensions such as-

- a) The script, presented in the form of an imitation of life.
- b) Medium of expression or Bhava and acting.
- c) Style of presentation.
- d) Evaluation made in the form of the applause from the audience.

It has thus all the characteristics of any act, whether it is dance, music, painting, sculpture or architecture. On this account the theory of Abhinaya became a paradigm for all art critics and the concepts in drama were employed in different art. They were employed in the criticism of poetry. This theory has been discussed in detail in Bharata's Natyashastra. But several refinements came from time to time in understanding and developing the art theory. In Odissi Abhinaya different art theories are employed by the masters and finally most of the principles we find from Upendra Bhanja's literature [9].

The act of Abhinaya is based on our understanding of our behaviour and the patterns it takes. In Bhanja's literature, there is a structured composition in his different poems which are very lucid and the rhythm of the composition is preserved and perfected. And the concept like Bhava and Rasa are assumed greater significance perhaps the spheres of these concepts are extended and they are used in the context of Odissi Abhinaya also. In dance performance, there is acting which is performance oriented. The performances are based on certain intentions of the creative artist or poet and even a dance presents a certain theme. Dance performance basically depends on Anga Abhinaya which is very minute and fine as seen in Odissi performance [10].

As a testament to the interdisciplinary nature of art, Bhanja sahitya can also be seamlessly incorporated into dance, music and theatre. Given the nature of abhinaya as a mode of aesthetic storytelling, it becomes even more pertinent that his visionary literary approach induced the coming together of several art forms. His poetry has been provided vast characterisations of Heroes and Heroines which have been used in through the nayaka and nayika bhedas in showcasing human relationships and emotions, thereby influencing the aesthetic and choreographic elements of Odissi dance.

**CONCLUSION:**

In conclusion, Upendra Bhanja's enduring legacy in Odia literature is profound. His remarkable contributions extend beyond mere words, resonating deeply within the realm of Odissi dance through the intricate expression of Abhinaya. Bhanja's poetic prowess, particularly in composing love lyrics rooted in Sringara Rasa, echoes the timeless melodies of Jayadeva's Geeta Govinda.

Through his epic compositions, Bhanja not only showcases ornate style but also delves into the depths of human emotions, enriching the cultural tapestry of Odisha. As we reflect on Bhanja's literary masterpieces, it becomes evident that his works possess an everlasting resonance, captivating the hearts and minds of generations to come.

**REFERENCES:**

- [1] Bhanja, U. (2012). Kotibramhanda Sundari (Part 1). In K. Sahani (Ed.), Sri Sri Biranchi Narayan Mandir.
- [2] Bhanja, U. (2012). Kotibramhanda Sundari (Part 2). In K. Sahani (Ed.), Sri Sri Biranchi Narayan Mandir.
- [3] Bhanja, U. (2019). Premasudhanidhi. In S. Panigrahi (Ed.), Satyanarayan Book Store.
- [4] Meher, H. (2008). Upendra Bhanja: The Great Poet of Orissa. Modern Sanskrit Literature.
- [5] Meher, H. (2018). Upendra Bhanja - The Great Poet of Orissa. Kalinga Bharati Utkal Sahitya Samaj, 1, 13.
- [6] Nanda, S. (2018). The Poetic Creation of Upendra Bhanja. Kalinga Bharati Utkal Sahitya Samaj, 1, 16.
- [7] Nanda, S., & Mohanty, S. C. (1983). Bhanja Mayukh. Kalinga Bharati, 284.
- [8] Panda, P. (1993). Premasudhanidhi. Books and Books.
- [9] Pattnaik, D. (2000). Bharatiya Nrutyakala. Orissa Sahitya Akademy.
- [10] Rath, S. (2008). Medieval Oriya Literature and Bhanja Dynasty. Orissa Review.