

Distinct quality of Brahui Folk-literature an expression of natural Phenomena

Language and Literature

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Abstract

Folk-songs are one of the oldest forms of literature and all the societies and cultures have their own heritage of Folk-songs. In this paper attempts have been made to describe the background of Hindi Folk-lore and then an English dictionary definition and description of the word Folk and Folk-lore have been given then we delve deep into the tradition of Brahui Folk-songs which have no written past and have been passing through generation by the singers. However, many Folk-poems have been distorted and twisted by the so-called intruders which have affected the purity of the Poem very badly. This malaise could be attributed to the absence of an institutional framework to compile and collect the original Folk-poems and publish them as an anthology. On distinct quality of Brahui Folk-songs have been deciphered i-e its first line has no direct connection with the second line. One word in the first line is chosen and for the sake of rhyming another line is created which has a different meaning. Another conspicuous quality of Brahui Folk-songs is that besides nature, it expresses a great deal about civilization and culture of the time. Some famous Brahui Folk-songs along with translations have also been given such as 'Sauzo' and 'chotali' which are very popular amongst the folks. The hallmark of Brahui Folk-songs is natural Phenomena depicted vividly with strong feelings.

Key Words: Brahui, Folk literature, folk poetry.

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Introduction

In Brahui Language, Folk-poetry has a strong tradition but this heritage is mostly in unwritten form and is passing from generation to generation through singers. Since there has been no institutional arrangements to preserve Brahui Folk-Poetry in writing therefore the process is continued by individuals casually which has resulted in many anomalies. This irrelevant modification in Folk-Poetry by inexperienced intruders has resulted in distortion and changed in the nuances of the language. The hall-mark of Brahui Folk-songs is its distinct quality which provides insight in civilization and cultural aspects of society. There is a general impression that in Brahui Folk-songs, the first line of a verse has no bearing on the second line. However, just for the convenience of rhyming, another line is added which may have no coherence with the subject. Apparently this can be true but after pondering over it, we find a separate peculiar secret which distinguishes Brahui Folk-song. In this thesis we try to show that the first line of a verse has in fact another inner quality. In many verses this line expresses a natural phenomenon. A Folk-song poet who has no formal education and is brought up in a natural surrounding when he derives inspiration from a natural scene, he expresses himself spontaneously. Then, by selecting a word a rhyme, he evokes his emotion and another poetic line is created. The description of natural environment mixed with human passions lead to the formation of a beautiful verse. The poetry then opens the way for wisdom and appeals to the senses.

Folk manners, Folk literature and Folk-songs

Folk literature has many dimensions and interpretations. In the 21st century world despite many types and genres in literature and their narration, emotional attachment to Folk-literature has not diminished. For the modern genres of art many rules, regulation and parameters have been devised but the simplicity of Folk-literature has maintained its relish with distinctive features and entity. In Urdu the concept of Folk-lore and its origin is the word Folk which the Cambridge Advanced Dictionary defines as follows:

1. Folk: People especially those of a particular group of people.
2. Modern music and songs that are written in a style similar to that of traditional music.
3. Describes art that expresses something about the lives and feelings of ordinary people in a particular group or country especially those

living in the countryside. (**Cambridge advanced learner's dictionary, 2008**)

In Urdu, the word “*Loke*” has been existing with all its related ingredients words, compositions, concepts and ideas. Etymologically the word *Loke* is Hindi in origin which means world, people, society, men etc (*Feroz Al Lughat*). With some people there are fourteen and with others there are seven *Loks* but three are very important: (i) *Sor Loke* i.e world adorning (ii) *Metho Lok* i.e world (iii) *Pathal Loke* i.e nether region (3).

When the word *Loke* (Folk) is used in the matters pertaining to people, society and their way of life then it will entail many other issues of importance relating to common People. For that matter *Loke* stories i.e those stories and legends which are in vogue amongst people, *Loke* songs those lyrics and songs which are prevalent in masses and is sung mostly in villages. *Loke* dance means, the primitive dance which is related to some ancient dance and has a bearing on some customs and festivals.

In Brahui the word *Loke* or Folk is also used with the focus on people especially with these words the range and circle of Brahui language is adorned. Whether it is *Loke* dance, *Loke* story or *Loke* songs, Brahui Language is at least not oblivious of it. In the same manner whether it is developed, underdeveloped or developing language or those languages which are dysfunctional and about to extinct; all are not bereft of Folk-literature. In developed languages much research work has been carried out and preserved in written form on every aspect of Folk-literature. On the other hand, we cannot deny the fact that not much work has been done on the treasure of Brahui literature and the written age of Brahui language is comparatively not long.

The concept of *Loke* literature is in vogue in Urdu literature which is alternate to the English word Folk-Lore. In English the word Folk-lore was first introduced by William Thompson in 1846. (**Sims, Martha; Martine Stephens 2005**). Before this, for such type of literature the concepts of popular literature and popular antiquities were used. In Cambridge Dictionary, folklore means People of a group or culture and traditional stories, however, ascertaining its true meaning is still to be discovered. Generally, it means those traditions which pass from one generation to the other orally. But this meaning has many defects because many social factors have been taken into account which does not fall in its ambit. It is like the process of cleaning teeth which is an oral tradition and passes from generation to generation but it cannot be called Folk-literature. In fact, Folk-

lore is not the name of any one thing and a definitive meaning for it is not possible.

However, to manage the discussion on this topic comfortably, determination of some factors is essential. Folk-lore is the informal and unofficial understanding and knowledge of world, men, society, creeds, customs and traditions. Its creative expression can be found in words, music, customs, conducts, behavior and dealings. It is all encompassing dynamic action for creation, communication and deeds.

Tradition of Folk-songs in Brahui Language

In Urdu, the concept of customs or traditions is normally used for Folk and in order to make a differentiation with other literature, the concept of Folk-literature has been adopted. In Brahui Language, the translation of English words Folk is the common man or people and in this connection the term villager is used where some idea of the primitive and modern life is prevalent. In today's world too, the majority of the Brahui People are leading a rural life where the Folk-literature survives in its real Folk-tradition.

In Brahui Folk poetry, the distinctive quality is that it evokes natural scenes. Although preserving Brahui poetry in written form started very late and it could not be preserved some pieces of this oral tradition. The individual level efforts were made by Dr. Abdul Rehman Brahui to protect this treasure. The artists of Radio and T.V selected some songs of Folk-singers and compiled them in a book from. This tradition was continued by Zauq Brahui who after impressing upon the Folk-singers in *Jhalawan* to sing; put their impression in Folk-literature that its creator is unknown while a main point included in the definition of Folk-literature is its prevalence amongst people. There are still creative persons in Brahui language who though are not well conversant with modern education but due to their social traditions and natural capabilities, they create Poetry and music on the pattern of old traditions. But without naming and identifying these creators many people have plagiarized their work and have published books accordingly. This has all the colors of Folk poetry but a basic and special color which is the peculiarity of old Brahui songs is missing.

The interesting Point in Brahui Folk poetry is its unique style in description of natural scene which has no direct symmetry with the second line and the subject. The key to joining the first line with the second line is the poetic elegance. One word of the first line is chosen as a rhyme and in the second line a similar word is selected and rhymed with the first one and thus the couplet is completed.

Description of natural phenomena in Brahui Folk-songs

In Brahui Folk-Poetry, the stature and tradition of *Saozo* (سوزو) (Dark complexioned beloved) has remained unquestioned till today. “*Saozo*” is the symbol of Folk-Poetry which prevails in the modern world with its initial words and tune i.e

“*Saozo* is my love, *Saozo*” سوزو کنا ساه ء او سوزو

In Brahui, the dark complexioned Person is called *Saozo* or *Sabzo* and even today’s poet use this word for beloved. As in the famous characters of *Qais-Amri*, well known as *Majnoon’s* beloved *Laila*, there is an opinion that *Laila* was of dark complexion and her name was used as a simile to night. The word *Saozo* is now in vogue and conspicuous in modern Brahui Poetry and an example is the saif ud din Naz’s Poetry whose first line is expressed as:

Don’t ask me who is *Saozo* کنے آن ارفیہ کہ نا سوزو دیرے

(مجھ سے یہ نہ پوچھیے کہ میرا سوزو کون ہے) In Brahui Poetry the important feature is that the first line starts with the description of natural scene while in the second line the poet talks about himself. The genre of poetry which we highlight as *Saozo* depicts the natural environment very delicately:

أُمید اے اللہ نا سوزو، سوزو

دیکو دلانا، سوزو او سوزو

Water of Pot, *Saozo’ oh, Saozo*

Trus in God *Saozo’ oh, Saozo*

گیائے بنگر، سوزو او سوزو

درنگ نازاُمُر و سوزو او سوزو

The have heard our secret gossips

Hanging zamur Plant, *Saozo’ oh*

Saozo, oh, Saozo

Saozo

سیخاہ گواش نا، سوزو او سوزو

ولِ ماش نا، سوزو او سوزو

Plant of Pulses, *Saozo’ oh Saozo*

Shahow of hill, *Saozo oh Saozo*

زیارت ولی نا، سوزو او سوزو

درخت گلی نا، سوزو او سوزو

Tree on the road *Saozo, of Saozo*

Shrine of a Saint, *Saozo of Saozo (Brahui, 1969).*

The pot water in the poem is used for rhyming it with the name of God in the second line. The first line has no bearing on the second line. The poet encourages the beloved that with the help of God, they will meet soom. The poet depicts natural objects as symbols like Pot water, Zamur Plants of Pulses, Street tree.

Another Folk-song, titled Flower like

Princess, the Poet used پھل انگارانی

This technique to express his emotions:

OX is weak, the Yoke cannot fit in خراس لاغر اے امپک جُغ ٹی

I saw laila (beloved) in dreams. (Brahui, 1969) لیلی اے خناس اِستو تغ اٹے

In village life, in the houses of cattle raising families, the young goats graze freely. This natural phenomena has inspired the poet to express his passion in averse.

خَلِبہ دغرے دانہ بنوکا

Don't beat the grain feeding young goat

اُستے درینے کسر نا بنوکا

The beauty strolling on the way has bewitched me. (Brahui, 1969)

A young girl 'Tajalo' who could be the jewel of her family in character and beauty in married off to a rustic in a far flung area:

شوری نا پٹ اے تاجلو تِسور نے جٹے تا جلو

The desolate land of Shori Tajalo

You were married off to a yokel. (Brahui, 1969)

One peculiarity of Brahui Poetry is:

Most of time the first line is not related to the second line regarding subject but it is not meaningless. It provides rhyme word to the poet and evokes a natural scene very artistically and beautifully:

جوڑہ تفوکے کین ٹی خن تا خلوکے پین ٹے

بر ناز نا بیتس کرک

The oxen are in harness

Others, have bewitched you

Come, oh, delicate girl and talk something. (Baloch, 2007)

'Barnazna' is a Poem of short meter and is one of the famous Brahui Folk songs.

Here the scenic beauty of a star is very well mentioned:

استار سلوکے پورنا مٹ اُس بنا نن مورنا

برناز نا برناز نا

The lode star (northern star) is shining

You are chosen by the beloved

Come, oh, delicate one (**Bedar, 1982**).

Chotali or chotoli (skylark) is an indigenous bird of Balochistan which hovers in the air and twitters very beautifully:

چوٹولی چُک اسے ، پُل تے اٹ گور کیک

Chotoli is a bird, moves in flower bed

گندی نا گند اسے خنتے کنا کور کیک

The smoked perfume, blinds my eyes

چوٹالی چُک اسے ، کاٹم اے تا تاج اسے

Chotali is a bird, with a crest on the head

خلک اٹ لیلی نا بھلو پائے راج اسے

In the village, there is a great charm of laily

چوٹولی چُک اسے ، وار وار آلو کیک

Chotali is a bird, sings from time to time

اُچ کنا لاغرے بُزرائی گوڈ کیک

My camel is weak, goes up slow (**Mengal, 2000**)

چوٹولی چُک اسے توسونے کلیرا

Chotoli is a bird, sitting on a clare (a tree)

دوتے کنا تھینو ، لیلی اے خلیرا

My hands are tied, laily to beaten

چوٹولی چُک اسے ، پُل تے ٹی جُپ کیک

Chotoli is a bird, jumping in the flowers

لیلی نا چُنکی پاوا اُستے کنا کپ کیک

The young age of laily, breaks my heart (**Parkoi, 2017**)

Folk poems have been collected and published in a book from titled as 'Mungoli' and a few line in urdu and English are:

گُلدر ایک دوا بے کہتے ہیں کڑوا ہوتا ہے (مورنا شعر)

Guldir is a medicine (herbal) which is bitter (poem of More)

راستے پر جارہا ہوں جس پر جن اور پریاں ہیں (خلفی شعر)

I am going on the way which is full of ghosts and fairies.

درخت پر ایک پرندہ بیٹھا ہے۔ آگے پہاڑوں میں ایک باغ ہے (خلقى شعر)

A bird is sitting on a tree, there is a garden ahead in mountains.

ناگائو کا انجیر ہے ، گھر یلو چکی کے چلنے کی آواز آرہی ہے سسوں کی بجلیاں (خلقى شعر)

Wild fig tree, noise of family grinder could be heard, monsoon lightening.

نیلگون بادل آتے ہیں، پہاڑی بیرى پک گئی ہے (نیلک نا شعر)

Blue clouds have come, berry is ripe in mountains.

The poet joins the natural phenomena with his own passion and evokes beautiful verses which appeal to the senses:

انت ہتین مال اے

سال کہ ڈ کالے

The year is in drought

how to feed our flock

بش میو کانبو پٹنبو لعلے

Let's get up and go search for ruby red beloved. (Mengal, 2000)

Brahui Folk song has its own genres and has different names regarding topic as well as technique. If the topic is unromantic in any form, it will be called as elegiac verse. Whatever the form may be whether 'haiko' or 'Mahia' the poem is used in eulogy of beloved with intensity and in the first line of the poem the natural scene is expressed beautifully.

Conclusion

Folk literature fundamentally relate to People's temperament and liking. With its distinctive character and atmosphere which it creates, it has the capability to live in the hearts of people, forever. Of all that has happened in Brahui Folk-literature, a very little has been preserved in written form. However, during the English era to protect some Folk-literature started but it was only a fraction. After the English, a stalemate occurred and much research work started again, it was in individual capacity and in fragments without any institutional cover. This resulted into research in a slipshod way and Brahui Folk-Poetry had been prone to many irregularities. There is no denying the fact that a great treasure of Brahui Folk-songs exists which besides technique and thought are assets appealing to aesthetics. The first line in Brahui Folk-songs starts with the description of natural scene where the Poet beautifully evokes his emotions, feeling and imagination. Expressing the natural phenomena, selecting a work as a rhyme, aesthetics and shade of romanticism and local ambience create a mosaic of Brahui Folk-songs. Although the first

line of a couplet has no bearing on the second line but for the sake of rhyming a word is selected and a second line is created.

The ever present problem in Brahui Folk-literature is the absence of institutional arrangements for preserving the Folk-songs in its real form. Some individuals have attempted to compile the Folk-literature in a book shape but mostly the encroachments by individuals have led to distortion of language, plagiarism and deviation from the true spirit of Folk-songs.

Brahui Folk-Poetry is very much interwoven with its society and culture and depicts the joys and sorrows of life in village and hamlets in a natural order. Which is needed is a right place for Folk-songs in literature. Which need institutional patronage and support to dig out and preserve the treasure of songs. At this juncture, we cannot deny the paramount role of Folk-singers who have been passing this genre from generation to generation through word of mouth.

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