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## Ghintamuni Pyakhan: An Inseparable Part of Jyapu Pyakhan

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The Ghintamuni dance has a special place in the dramatic tradition of the Newars. This dramatic tradition has moved in consonance with the trends of Jyapu dance. In Newari language, 'Pyakhan' stands for many things: pantomiming dance, dance, musical drama, drama, cinema, telefilm etc. Therefore, the word 'Pyakhan' has a broad meaning.

There are evidence that show that Pyakhan not only refers to one of the genres of the literature, but also sets historical links with religion and culture in Newari society. Bhupatindra Malla, the king of Bhaktapur during the Malla regime, had performed a drama titled Bikramcharit when he had renovated Taleju Bhawani Temple, putting eleven pinnacles in 826 (Nepal Sambat). A short information of the drama performed on the squares during the time of King Bhuptindra Malla has been mentioned herewith:

*Shree shree shree mool chukaya gajuli chhana udesa shree shree Jay Bhupatindra  
Malla devsana Vikram charitra pyakhan dayasake vijyanga*

(Joshi va Shakya 1090: 119).

In the main part of the drama *Bikramcharitra*, establishing of eleven golden pinnacles has been mentioned:

*Aya sundari shree shree shree thao kuldevata pritina prasadat lumpalin chiyava  
jipachhapu gajula chhaya yagya karmasa nana deshanam ova janapani ranjalate  
nimitinam shree shree Jaya Bhupatindra Malla devanam..... Bikramadityama  
charitrassa pyakhan dayakiyo dhakam agya prasanna jusyanam chhasalata*

(Joshi va Shakya 1090: 3).

In this way, the kings of the Malla dynasty not only focused on religious activities but also wrote dramas with moral lessons, and entertained people. During the marriage ceremony of King Bhupatindra Malla, Jitmitra Malla wrote a drama titled Madalasa Harana and it was also performed.

*Shree 2 sumit Jaya Jitmitra Malla bhardisamat madarsaharan pyakhan..... Nepal  
Sambat 807 Ashadh badi shree 5 Bhuptindra Mallaya vivahyata .....*

(Bajracharya 2046: 30).

Mention too has been made of the dramatic trend in Newari language, especially performed during marriage ceremonies and special occasions.

There is a trend of celebration for one week after the Gaijatra (or from the full moon of Bhadra (August) to the eighth night) and one week after Indraajatra Festival.

The political change of the country too affected the trend of these festivals. During the Malla Regime, the king and the public celebrated the festivals together, whereas during the time of Shah Rule, a division was created. During the Rana regime, this trend of differentiation highly increased and in the time of Bhim Shansher—one of the Rana rulers—, the documents recorded in Newari language were made useless. It really discouraged researches in Newari language. Not only that, one of the Rana rulers announced that no literature should be written in Newari language. This led to a decrease in the number of authors. It also affected the Jyapu community in a great deal.

To celebrate the Gaijatra and Indraajatra, the Jyapu community had to perform dramas but for want of experts and dramatists, they began to continue their tradition with certain dances and dramas created by themselves. That helped to contribute to the enrichment of Newari literature in its own way. As the Jyapu community wrote the song and performed on it, it got the name 'Jyapu Pyakhan'. It was natural that since the Jyapus were not in touch with the palace and monarch, they had no any influence of the palace in their dance and dramas. If the Jyapu community had not created such songs and dances as well as dramas, until the 1950 revolution, there would be no trace of Pyakhan. Therefore, late Prem Bahadur Kasa considers Pyakhan to be a bridge between modern Newari drama and the old Newari drama: "*Jyapu pyakha prachin pyakha va aadhunik pyakhaya hwiga kha:*" (1084:18-19).

Jyapu Pyakha is 150 years old. Especially before the trend of publishing the dramas, the gullible Jyapus created and wrote the drama of their own, and performed in their own way which helped to preserve their culture.

The Jyapus had paid attention to three things, as they wrote the Jyapu Pyakhan. The first was to entertain the audience with some satirical events. The second was to make the audience feel sorry with some tragic events and the third, to fascinate the audience with love scenes and conversations. In this way, the Jyapu Pyakhan can be divided in to three groups:

- 1) Ghintamuni Pyakhan – Romance based
- 2) Tragic Pyathan– Tragedy based
- 3) Satirical Pyakhan– Comedy based

In Jyapu Pyakhan, the dance begins after one male and one female come ahead and pray to Earth God and audience, as in the ancient dramas of Newari language. Those male and female appear in the middle of the drama and inform the audience about the move of the story. At the end of the drama also, they appear and saluting the audience, announce the end. The two reach out to the audiences and talk with them as well. This, terminal part of the Ghintamuni Pyakhan has not only remained a saluting of the Earth God and audience, but has taken the form of a drama with romantic ethos.

Though, initially the Ghintamuni Pyakhan was included in the main drama to provide a romantic feeling to the audiences, the audiences liked the romantic, tragic and satirical aspect of the Pyakhan. And thus it was developed as a distinct dance to entertain the audience with romantic dances of male and female dancers. According to Prem Bahadur Kasa, Ghintamuni Pyakhan separated from Jyapu Pyakhan in 2000 B.S. During the Rana regime, the youths did not have enough means of entertainment, and therefore, after the daylong hard labor, they used to gather and see the dance by the dancers, both males and females, with complete erotic gestures.

The youth did not like other types of Ghintamuni dances with tragic and satirical content. Therefore, the particular Ghintamuni Pyakhan separated, and became the interest of the youths.

The drama used to be performed, based on mythological, religious and tragic subject matters, which created tragic feelings in the audiences. They performed on the tragic themes like the great philanthrop King Harishchandra, Prince Dikpal, Lal- Heera, Kabir Kumar, Mahasatwa Rajkumar, Karmaveer-Kameshwori etc. These are not original stories created by the Jyapu community, but they carried on the trend of dramatizing such mythological subject matters for performance. In this way, dramatizing tragic stories was done to create tragic feelings in the audiences. They not only created tragic feelings in the audiences but also entertained with some satires on social perversions, by putting different colors on the face and performing as a police with a gun of stick in funny dresses and so on. The main intention of such comic performance in between was to provide a comic relief to audience struck by tragic feeling.

The main intention of the Ghintamuni Pyakhan is to entertain the audience with the performance of tragic, satirical and romantic actions mixed together with different ethos like romantic ethos, tragic ethos and comic ethos. It was a play worked out in accordance with the taste of the audiences. The satires were to expose social perversions. As serious perversions were exposed with the help of satires, the audiences easily accepted it and took to be free from such perversions. Not only that, the performers also tried to create awareness among people about such perversions. For instance—

*Byaha yana swala maruni gula dumha macha data.  
Thathinamba macha vana mamha methaya payana vana.*

(Kasa : 1084 26)

[A woman gave birth to a child after three months of her marriage and eloped with another man, leaving the child.]

Here the woman is pointed to have a lecherous nature but in reality she had to marry because, a boy made her pregnant and left her alone. A woman becoming pregnant before marriage is not considered good; so, she deserts her own child and elopes with a man. Any woman wants to preserve her motherhood, but she has to face defamation, as her dignity is crushed. Such serious issues are presented satirically, entertaining the audiences.

In Ghintamuni dance, the roles of both male and female are acted by males. A male, who acts a female, wears female dresses. The audiences are fascinated even with such men who appear like women. They accept the males and females with full of entertainment. In the beginning, the males used to act Lord Shiva and Parvati and they stayed at a distance with the audience but in the Ghintamuni dance, the characters go among the audience to collect money. It enables the audience to come in contact with them and even the audience begin to flirt with, and tease the characters. They even embrace and kiss them.

The performance gradually turned into a means for earning money. Some limited persons with extreme sexual desire began to hire the performers of Gintamuni dance at their own houses to get their sexual desires fulfilled, albeit for some days.

The Gintamuni dance has lingered, while other parts of Jyapu Pyakha have been ignored by the people. The Ghintamuni Pyakha got more popularity and took the form of a folkdance. Even today, the dance is not only popular among the Newars but also has acquired a significant place in Nepal's dramatic trend. Due to the popularity of the dance, even during Jyapu Pyakhan, the Ghintamuni dancers are called to the front of the stage and made to tell the theme of the dance, before the actual performance begins.

In modern days too, drama modeled on Ghintamuni have been performed. Many have appreciated the performance of the drama Kirtipurko Bagh Bhairav at Gurukul, written by Satya Mohan Joshi, a culturalist and literary figure. The critiques and analysts of the drama have appreciate the male and female Jyapus coming onto the stage and saluting Earth God as well as the audience and explaining the theme of the drama. The media wonderfully covered the news as something that gave a new form to the dramatic presentation. Actually the drama is drama based on historical subject matter, which denotes how the popular Bagh Bhairav of Kritipur was established. It is about the origin of Bagh Bhairav. Satya Mohan Joshi gave a new form to the mythological story in dramatic style, by including Ghintamuni Pyakha of the larger Jyapu Pyakha tradition. The Ghintamuni Pyakha was used in Bagh Bhairav in the same way as it was used in Jyapu Pyakhan during Rana Regime. By using it in Bagh Bhairav, the Jyapu Pyakhan was given a new life by Satya Mohan Joshi though it was displaced from the society. This technique was new to those who didn't know about presentation of Jyapu Pyakhan. Experts of Pyakhan recalled the form of Ghintamuni Pyakhan of Rana regime as male and female Jyapus were used in Bagh Bhairav drama.

During the Rana Regime, the males used to act as females too, but in the presentation of Bagh Bhairav women themselves had played their roles. The males in female costumes used to go to the audience, entertain them and collect money but the females used in Bagh Bhairav drama did not go to the audience, nor collect money. The Ghintamuni dance was presented in natural form as before. The audience got full entertainment. The presentation of was experienced in a new way. Therefore, the Ghintamuni created by the Jyapu community as per their wit, has been accepted naturally by the literary and intellectual circle today.

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