

“Imagery of Sarala Dasa”

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I

Before entering into the actual subject matter of our discussion it is wise to add a few introductory lines on eternal poetry, poetic picture and Sarala’s concept of poetry.

Firstly eternal poetry always illuminates magnanimous perceptions towards life-time-race and truth. The suggestion by the imagination, of noble grounds for the noble emotions is the essential quality of excellent poetry. The content of true poetry is imaginative and emotional interpretation of life-relevant. This creative interpretation of truth must be clothed in a systematically rhythmical language and figurative diction. Figures of speech and metrical diction are essential to the emotional and evocative appeal of poetry. This type of pictorial significance of expression is known as imagery of poetry.

It is needless to say that the image is an impression of the object in the mind of viewer. It is a poetic device, which consists in the use of pictorial words and phrases in such an objective manner as to make the meaning more pointed, clear, impressive, absolute, emphatic and the language more graphic and vivid. Imagery is an illustrative process of poetry by which poetic idea ascends from external world to internal world. Simply Imagery turns every thing to loveliness and gives tenderness and propriety to a poetic vision.

Now, we can arbitrate the Sarala’s concept of poetry. The western analysts of Imagery trends, even our Ritiyangika stalwarts believe that the two types of poet can play pictorial game in the poetry-field. The first category is products of an age. Such poet may aggregate as second grade poet or Sebita Kabi. The creative fancy of the second grade poet is to pursue the trends and factors of age. But the second category poet is acceptable as creator of an age. He is honoured first grade poet and well known as **Chinta-mani Kabi**. His easemplastic power can change the traditional discourse and establish new justice with innovative shape in flow of literature.

Our national-epic-creator **Sarala Chandi Dasa** has been accepted as **Chinta-mani kabi** in the brilliant galaxy of the Pan-Indian poets. He is a prominent figure and our Sahrudayas consider him as a best talent and Adiresource of the post-Sanskrit-Indian literary history. His poetic Imagination has inter-twined pastoral figures of speech and poetic diction with new-judgment and challenged the traditional classical Byasaic vision and discourse.

In Sarala’s imagination there is no room for the elitist Sanskrit literature considering the contemporary history and socio-cultural reality. So, his imagery, style and diction were highly conditioned by vernacular rather than by classical

language and stylization. He preferred the familiar, colloquial and day to day content words to the unfamiliar one. Later on his contemporary mythological poets as well as the poets of the following generations of the eastern India were greatly inspired by his poetic diction and phraseology as far as the imagery is concerned.

In response to historical viewpoint Sarala Dasa, a poet of the fifteenth century (contemporary of Suryavamsi king Kapilendra Dev, the great) is universally regarded as the 'Adi Kabi' or originator of the Odia literature. His immortal works (Mahabharat, Bilanka Ramayana, Chandi Purana, etc) are remarkable for development of common social sentiments, cultural rituals, socio ethical life style delineation of earthly character, synthesis of Dravidian – Aryan – Austric cultures and religious picturesque descriptions and excellent use of various poetic figures and metre of folk style. One peculiarity of his magnum Mahabharata and Chandi Purana is that both liner of a verse do not comprise an equal number of letters, but the last rhythmic letters of the lines produce and multiply the monotonous sound. By the fifteenth century the Odia language and its poetic quality had asserted almost its new powerful novel form and had become ripe for poetic constructions. The composing cultivator Sarala utilized this language as a literary existence.

Poetic creativeness was in the blood of Sarala Dasa and it flowed from his shackle stylus as words flowed from his soily experienced mouth. His epical-verses are lucid, untraceable, simple, folky, captivating, credible, forceful, musical and able to beget a psychic image in the reader's mind. His solo-ornatic poetic style and diction is generally stated in common base and place. The creativeness of sarala was no chooser of words as bad or goods. All type of words being

equally worthwhile for him to create a new mythic image and poetical illustration. The predominant sentiment in Sarala's poetic power is to originate new images, the imageries are of love, devotion, ritual, idiomatic faith, war and common life.

Sarala's imaginary creations formed a perpetual source of inspiration to the succeeding generations of Odia and its neighbour language writers. It is true to speak that till the perennial stream of Sarala's imagery-talent has no break. The image pattern and formation technique of imagery of Sarala Dasa is based on two distinctive manner. One is words appearance as a group to suggest the theme as a picture and other one is episodic elucidative image. In this manner an incidental narrative episode also able to act as an elucidative picture by story playing imagination of poet. The scope of our subject "**Imagery of Sarala Dasa**" is vast. The subject is being only a study of the salient features of the image-component in the Sarala's Mahabharat.

Though our Adikabi was hardly vigilant of experimental imagism or even the great rhetorical tradition of the middle age, or the romantic images of modern trends, still his poetry is a perfect replica of all the said qualities. His "**Adoshou Sagunou - Bibhabana Kabi Byapara**" glorified and dignified the Odia language and literature and founded a new figurative style in the genre. His thought – provoking, transformative sensuous images are chosen and originated from visual realities and are ultimately perceived by his readers as psychological realities. Clarifying own poetic concept as an "AJONI-KABYA-PRATIVA or TULYA-DEHI TULYA-PRATIVA", Sarala claims strongly that- "*Adrastiki drusti muhin karaeli ani*", it means his imagery creative mind has been able to make invisible visible and the abstract concreteness.

Before Sarala Dasa in the Sanskrit Puranas and court epics, narratives were told in transcendental diction, but Sarala has broken this punditocratic process and entered into a discourse of interpretations'. He has rejected the lexical and classical-rigorous styles and highlighted a new design of spontaneous figurative interpretation. His aesthetic creativeness and imagery expression was based on six factors. These are-

1. Pictorial quality of the words.
2. Discovering the higher truth, even Absolute in the material world through an abstract vision.
3. Blending of behavioural words with the standard dictions.
4. Composed on ironic, dramatic, onomatopoeic presentation and approaches.
5. Unique-expression of ornamental images with an objectified-process.
6. Synthesis of elegance, suggestiveness, comparison and similarity.

Part - II

Ellipsis, metaphoric comparison, motivated act, conferring of meaning, afferent-performance, empirical photography of object, de-personalization principles, de-text of facts and

verbosity are the magical characteristics of Sarala's imagery, which have drawn in a universal in his ever-readable works – Mahabharat, Chandi Puran, Bilanka Ramayana and Malashrees.

It is true that Sarala has no chance to acquire the applied knowledge about using of Concrete/Broken/Coupling/Colored/Sensitive/ Allegorical/Content oriented/ and living images like using of simile, epic simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, pathetic fallacy, antithesis, equivocate, exaggeration fantasy, amplification fancy, dissimilitude contrast, paradox and metonymy. It is surprise, the ancient-Sarala has believed (like a modernist) that better poetry can compose and perceive through imagination and passion. His penetration has understood also, poetry relates to whatever gives immediate pleasure to the mind and evokes the emotions of all time through the figurative and hyperbole (Atisyoki) manner. It was happened only for his "Prarabdha Basana"(Anti-innate purified tendency) and inborn talent. The pre-time images such as simile, metaphor, metaphor, atisayokti, utpreksha, brakroti, ullekha and other similar aesthetic projections play prominent role for transferring the artistic experience of poets mind to the heart of a refined reader. The boldness of his imagery method is objectified and personified. Here are some illustrated examples:-

Odia verse of Sarala	Translated meaning	Imagery speciality
* Sutra chhinda kendra ki aba sura viaeba/Amla dia dugdha ki swadaku paeba."	* What tune a kendra (a single stringed musical instrument as lyre used by Nath-jogi or mendicants of Odisha) will throw : if string is torned. How can tamarind (sour) mixed milk will measure up to the taste of real milk.	* It is a recreative image. Here, poetical fancy is well-laid and alleg orized through a synthesis process of Sanskrit, indigenous and Sanskrit originated words. Here, metaphor and hyperbole are well-settled jointly and able to draw the mental picture of grief-minded Draupadi.

- * "Manaba heba yatharu badi samsare kichhi nahin/phuta nta bruksha tharu aphutanta brukshaki priti karahoe."
- * Just as a flowering tree is far better than barren one /being a proper man much in this same way/which is far greater than claiming a man.
- * It is a specimen of Sarala's living - image and universal epic feeling. Its speciality is based on paradoxical fancy. The productive imagination of poet's mind is able to give a figurative meaning of complete and proper man through positive image- flowering tree and negative image- barren tree with a paradoxical manner. On the other hand intellectual image- "barren and flowering tree" and emotional image - "being a proper man", both are laid to give a vitality to figurative meaning. Here, a refined reader can co-relate himself with the Ezra pound's definition - An image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant time.
- * "Apurana asaye Parama dukkha samaste bichari."
- * It is a common belief that unfulfilled desires are cause of supreme distress.
- * It is a mental allegorical-picture of Kunti as well as poet Sarola. Through this psychic-figurative speech Sarola would like to inform his readers that the unfulfilled desires of Pandavas/ Kauravas / Karna/Arjuna/ and mainly Draupadi are root cause of extreme - distress, that is Mahabharata - Mahasamar. It was well-known to Kunti as an image of archetypical mother.

Personification is really a special kind of metaphor for Sudramuni in which inanimate objects and abstract ideas or other kind of livings spoken of, as if they are human beings. In this sense his whole poetic world is an illusory world in which abstractions become concreteness and endowed with life-colour and form. A flower, a tree, a river

a forest, a bird, a dog, a snake, a mountain, an emotion, a mood, an idea; whatever else all participate as a living being in the life game of the characters. Human personality and its inner beauty are depicted in terms of natural things of beauty for example:-

- Vabilaki dware subidhaye khada khada kale (He/Sakuni thought that opportunity knocked at his door).
- “Bikasita kusuma praye alap karuachhi (talking just like blooming flower).

Here opportunity and talking – blooming flower, both are personified by the poetic- fancy-game of Sarala.

The imagery of Sarala is often visual. This visual has based on soil- colour, but may appeal to any of our senses and able to create a photographic circle in the psychic landscape of the reader. Here, there are some remarkable and simple examples of sensitive imagery:-

Odia verse of Sarala	Types of sensitive image	Translated meaning
* "Chahante bakra nayene hruda jiba phuti/Janahite prithibire rakhiachhi drusti/ Kinchita matre ye jebe chainba savaku/Aneka purusa hatya lagiba yehaku !"	* Sighting image	* Draupadi looks bashfully at the ground, for she would be certainly cause of many deaths, in this groom assembly, if she looked in a sidelong glance at us.
* "Kunchita kesa yehara kede manohara/ Biharanti puspa gandha paekari madhukara."	* Synthesis of gustatory, tactile and factory images	* How lovely are her curly locks, attract bees by their sweet flowery fragrance.
* "Yeha dekhi Bhimasen taratina chahin"	* Auditory image.	* Observing Draupadi's hesitation to sleep in soft bed of ashes, Bhima stared rudely at her.
* "Kunti boyele vikshasi atanti mo poye/ to karme yehanku tuhi pailu go maye / Jaha tu arajiachhu taha bhoga kara/ sampada bipada ye goo samsara bevara."	* The words of this verse give a lucid feeling of consolation and advice and objectified the total factor of meaning.	* Kunti said to newly married Draupadi, it is the principle of kKarma and fate. Good or evil fortune is the order of this world.

Sarala is one of the genius in the ancient-regional-literature of India, to whom poetry was life and soil picture, neither philosophy nor ethic or religion. His poetic personality has no deception to any sort of idealistic proclaiming. He likes to present only stories about common man

through charming figure of speech or living image. In Sarala's works while a reader loses many excellent relevant of the original Sanskrit creations, on the other side he also gets interesting, indication and meaningful new images through fresh stories, situations and characters. While making living

images the great pastoral talent Sarala has played damageable game with the very order of the tradition. For his “Nabusrusti vihana”(fancy of new-creativity) the imagery also acts as benefactor. This can be illustrated now with some examples:-

- Stories transformed to imagery:- The Story of true mango, Nabagunjar, Varada, fear of Kokua, Radhachakra, Un-burnt body of Srikrishna, Sahada bruksha brutanta, Simili bruksha brutanta, etc.
- Episode transferred to imagery:- The episode of Jhimini/Ha-do-do game, meeting of Karna-Kunti, holding of donkey's feet by Srikrishna, descent of Kali, episode of Bhurisaraba and Bisikesan, etc.
- Characters transferred to imagery- Babanabhuta, Bruhannala, Sakuni, Srikhandi, Khalyakara, Belasena, Sisupala, truthful Sahadev, etc.
- Object/events/situations/statement transferred to imagery- matidosa (Fault of soil), raktanadi (river of blood), saptama Prithivi (seventh world), Karna Siddhi Bhumi (suggestion and advice giving country), Asahana bhumi (a country which cannot bear neighbour's happiness), Chiti judhya (Shadow war of enemies), etc.
- Contained matters turned to Idiomatic – Imagery- Jhimiti khelaru mahabharata, Karnamale panch, Arjuna male panch, Tula muhan Kanka, Akoira bala Bisikesan, Bhurisarabara pagadi, Asarane Gadhapada Dhariba, Phaji mara bhima, Golaka Putra, Astukara purusha, Akhada Chandi, Gagan chari, Tulasibana Bagha, Chaluni bichar, Asha Baitarani, Ganga kahile thibi – Gangi kahile jibi etc.

The above-mentioned stories, episodes, characters, idioms, lines prove that Sarala has an innovative talent and these innovative relevant have gone deep into the national life of Odias. If a happening becomes spectacular, growing out of a worthless affair, an Odia speaker illustratively says this is indeed a terrific war ‘Mahabharat’ growing out of a childish game of Jhimiti ha-do-do (original verse of Sarala is- yeka Bhimasen maele Jhimiti khede/Jhimiti viaele kutuhale jhagada samphode) like this any pious hypocrite even in current Odisha is described as “the tiger in holy basil-forest”, or “the stroke with the cotton wool in its beak”, or “Heron-sage”.

Therefore Sarala's neologism is based on idiomatic imagery along with their epigrammatic, rustic simile, folk metaphor and onomatopoeia qualities. His epic and Puranas are a picture gallery of idioms and photographic words are Odias' native life. Some examples:-

Odia Words	Imagery / suggestive meanings
Baitha Raja	Opportunity advisor in Politics
Chaluni bichar	thickheaded thinker
Gala muguria	knavery quality or deceitful fellow
Golaka putra	illegitimate child/son of double father
Akasa kusuma	castles in the air
Daun mariba	to make a bargain
Danta kada kada kariba	to grash/grind the teeth
Dau sadhibara bhuin	to put in a hole
Budhi disunahin	be out of wits
Bhima parakrama	herculean might
Sori sori budhi	flowering knowledge
Babana bhuta khaeba	wasted due to the lack of ownership
Matiya akasha	(Brownish sky) unpleasant situation

Tapa tapa	dropping sound again and again
Tala tula	Pretext principle
Daga daga	hastily walk
Ahuri Ahuri	more and more
Daka daki	inviting each other
Thela theli/ Kata mata	pushing mutual / rudeness vision
"Nare ba gunjara Aswasthama hata hoye"	man or elephant, named Aswasthama has died in the battle (diplomatic way of false telling)
"Kala sainyara drusti	eyes of death Hawk (these are folk-oriented images also)

Above ellipsis-oriented imagery proves that Sarala also enriched the Odia poetic language as well as behavioural language with illustrative idioms at par with the great western poets namely Homer, Dante, Chaser and Shakespeare to their respective language. The aesthetic quality of this kind of imagery is musical in language, figurative in diction, and suggestive as well as prosaic in approach.

As an opposite literature the Odia Mahabharat is very much a reaction against feudalism and aristocracy. According to poet's inner vision the term "Mahagola" itself is a symbolic imagery as "mahasamar or great battle" which was occurred to give a tragic finish to the feudalist and aristocratic attitudes of society. Duryodhana, the anti-hero of Sarala (representative of prince pride) is delineated as the greatest feudal, who crosses the river of blood of Kurukshetra sitting on the corpse of his beloved son Lakshman Kumar. But his feudalistic and aristocratic proudness underwent a metamorphosis in the hand of Sudra-Kabi into a tragic-father. For example :

- "Mohara paraye pita tora au nohu, tohar paraye putra janme janme heu"(may you not get

a father like me/but may I be always blessed as a son like you).

This is an excellent example of pathetic fallacy as well as successful imagery of pathos. The greatest mystery of Sarala's imagery here is its power to invest the saddest thing with beauty and truth. The last consequence of jealousy, unfair and arrogance nothing but to cross the river of blood with own tears.

Part - III

According to Indian approach towards concept of poetry, the centre of gravity in an epic may lie in its emotional moods or Rasas (particularly *srungar*, *karun*, *bira*, *santa*, *bibhastha*, *adbahuta* as Angirasa of epic). For a great poet is an emotional pursuit and not an intellectual exercise. But **Bilakshyana-Kalpa Byapara** of Sarala has changed this concept and proved that living poetry is a well synthesis of emotive mood and intellectual exercise of "vag-vikalpa" or magical phrase. Sarala's imagery plays connotative and denotative games in reader's mind. His epic and Puranas is a picture gallery of Odian social life that is true even today. His creative imagination (Nabashruthi Viana) co-relates the geographical, historical, mythical and social-anthropological aesthetics in a new approach using of imagery. Daring Sarala gives out a deeper and profound truth using of Atisayukti, Utprekhya, Rupaka and Mahakabyika *upama* and well-grounded the Odia language in poetic sense.

The sightable imagery competence of Sarala is, using of affective fallacy and epic simile. Description of war (Karna and Arjun, Bhima and Dhusa, Bhima and Jarasandha), battle field (Kurukshetra, battle field of Matsya Desa), forest (Nandana Bana, Sudha Bana, Khandaba), river, mountain, ocean scene, narration of ascent to the heaven, beauty of women (Draupadi, Tripura

Mohini Surekha) through long drawn simile by Sarala has enriched ornamental and Puranic literary heritage of eastern India in medieval time. Stylizing the long drawn image he has taken a central pictorial simile. This central simile has created numerous sub-images (tenor and vehicle). These secondary images are successful sub-services to transplant the poet's feeling and conferring the actual meaning of the primary image. For example- The image of river of blood contains number of other images like whirlpool as broken chariot, waves as elephant, blood as water, rafts as armours, corpses as crocodile, etc. All these are evocated the image river of blood through the opulence of long drawn simile and metaphor. This type of perfect image stands on four pillars, i.e intellectual, emotional, imaginative and technical elements which is very close to Anandavardhan's "sabda-dryasya-byuha sarjana".

The appeal of the Saralian imagery may be remarked by the following illustrations:-

(A)- Dramatic – representation of metaphor:-

- Holy heron – which is the water of Baitarani ?
Yudhistira – desire is the Baitarani.
- Holy heron – which Kamadhenu milks day and night, who drinks it ?
Yudhistira – vidya kamadhenu that milks forever and good-evil drink the milk sitting together.

(B)- Comparative response of simile:-

- On seeing the furious eye of Kichaka, Sairendhri was frightened like a path missing deer at the sight of hunter's archer.
- Yudhistira saw the river Baitarani as a fair flowing lady.
- Waves are hands of sea.
- Pleasures of revenge celebrated function in brown sky like suckling child.

- Pitamaha Vishma sleeps in arrow bed in the battlefield, with blood dripping out of his injured body, mangled all over as it was by Arjun's arrows, whole are appeared "like the old Dhak tree in full flower, or as red stars gathered near setting-moon.

In the above mentioned examples the images have been carried effectively by Sarala: The prevailing moods desire – Baitarani, path missing deer fair flowering lady, brownish sky, suckling child, flowering old Dhak tree have been brought to the forefront as if nourished by the metaphor, simile served the more charming and aesthetic reactions in reader's mind. The aesthetic activities of metaphor, simile, allegory, are to create harmony between concreteness and abstract as well as exclusion with inclusion. Here, the readers must agree that the elevated land or canvas of Saralian imagery is based on three horizons –that is telescopic canvas, pastoral canvas and natural canvas. The uniqueness of his imagery is that a indigenous term is controlling the whole figurative diction, verse meaning as content or central world. For this reason his style can be identified as practicable as **'Baidarvi Panchali'** and the controlling authority of imagery expression is **Swabhabokti** and **"Samashokti"**.

Sarala has used the above-discussed examples as benefactor for generalization of poetic ideas. The appealing characteristics of Sarala's imagery here are-

- Concrete objects compared with abstract things.
- Abstract things compared with concrete objects.
- Various objects used as standard of comparison.

Instead of these a number of ritual-beliefs of the contemporary normal life have used metaphorically as imagery in his epic in a positive

manner. Some of these are “Udhakumbha, Mangalakumbha, Nabagunjara, Jugala Haladibasanta, Chaka Boethi, Purba Muhain Nahula, Dhala Dhana, Sankha Chila”. After all the living and coupling-image lies in the very nature of his poetry which is regarded as objective in character intended, chiefly to present the action and passion of the outer world. The image of **Saptama Prithivi, Nabagunjara, Kokua**, may be taken as example. **Saptama Prithivi** (seventh world) is imaginary one of Sarala’s inner-vision, which means a desirable positive world, where one can feel and face the order in disorder, good in evil, gain in loss, success in failure and creation in destruction. So far these fragrances of opportunity must be divided to all without any difference between subjects and objects. Here imagery has been presented like a series of magic mirrors according to an oxymoron pattern (oxymoron bringing together of two or more words or phrases having opposite meaning but evocating jointly).

On the other hand the image “**Nabagunjara**”, (bashed on austic faith and painting) which Sarala has depicted in Mahabharata is nothing but a symbolical fancy act of Lord Jagannath/Srikrishna. This idea has been originated from the uncommon imagination of Sarala. This mystic-imagery set forth an appeal of a new idea of aesthetic beauty. The suggestive meaning of this image is to console the failures, to develop affection for the sins, to grasp the evils, to pardon animalism, etc. **Nabagunjara** assumed the organs of all living creatures in one body, evocate an eternal truth before the reader that aesthetic circle of the Universe is synthesis of including all.

Part - IV

Within whole lifetime Sarala has imagined near about 2 lakh five thousand poetic verses and used 12,30,000 terms, which is

identification of his great poetic talent. In spite of producing above number of words and lines, if Sarala would have created only some living, archetypical and evocative imagery like Nabagunjara, Asa Baitarini, Chetasa Purusa, Divya Suta, Agni Kanya, Prarabdha Purusa, Trikala Mana, Satyamba, Rakta Nadi, Mahamani, Mahabedi, Tulasibana Bagha, Mahagola, then he would have been honoured as a universal poet by the readers of all time. In response to boldness and vividness of imagery of our readers would place Sarala one degree up immediately next to Valmiki, Vyasa, Kalidas, Hala and Sriharsa.

The period of Sarala Dasa is a golden and glorious chapter of Odian history. During this period Odisha has reached the highest pinnacle of glory in different spheres like art and architecture, literature, culture, warfare, administration, agriculture, and trade and commerce. A splendid period provides to a poet free mind and amazing poetic thought. Amidst this circumstance a poet turned into privies great magnus poet. From this point of view, as a great epic-creator Sarala has manifested grand photographic thrills of empirical feelings of human race in his works.

Above all the round shaped – holy eyes of Lord Jagannath, the beauty of the wheels of the chariot shaped Konarka temple, architecture of Rajarani temple and Sarala’s imagistic genius are full proud privileges of Odisha that proves- “Jaha nahin Bharate taha nahin Bharate”- it means which are not available as imagery in Sarala’s national epic “Mahabharat”, any Sahurdaya cannot meet anywhere in Indian context as well as earth context.

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