INTERTWINING OF THE INTIMATE AND PUBLIC CHARACTER IN LOVE AND WEDDING ALBANIAN LYRIC SONGS

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Abstract: The Albanian people, through centuries, has created a treasure of lyric songs in which he has expressed the human emotion in many spiritual dimensions. In these songs, he had shown synthetically his own philosophical and human concepts The tendency of these songs is the interest in social, familiar and intimate issues with all their wideness for the general and personal, objective and subjective, for the inner part and the outer one. The lyrical songs of love and wedding, which are syntheses of a fine philosophic concept of distinguished humanism and above all, of a processing and wonderful artistic expression, harmonically intertwine the intimate with public moments and feelings. This is mostly seen in the weeding songs, in which moments of happiness and emotions of the bride and groom are linked with the people's feelings. While in love songs, intimate occupies greater part and the people has expressed vibrations of feelings and emotional states of the lover and their barriers coming from the preventing traditions and customs. Nevertheless, these songs with the harmonic combination of inner and outer feeling expression given through a poetic brilliant art processed through centuries, define the values of the Albanian popular poetic art.

Key-words: popular art, intimate, public character, intertwining, popular ideal, virtues, romance, feeling, poetic expression

The virtues of the Albanian people developed through centuries are incorporated in his oral artistic creativity being thus the most focused manifestation of the human and poetic spirit of several generations.

In this paper, we will concentrate on some features of the lyrical songs of love and wedding which are synthesis of a fine philosophic concept of distinguished humanism, and above all of a processing and wonderful artistic expression.

The tendency of these songs is the interest in social, familiar and intimate issues with all their wideness for the general and personal, objective and subjective, for the inner part and the outer one. This poetry, being in the same time chronic of the spiritual life of the community, brings in front of us a poetic universe and important aspects where the intimate and public are harmonically intertwined.

The lyrical popular songs of love are of great importance because they present the popular ideal for the female, especially for the family. Within them we discover the progressive vision for life and the relationship between the young people that people maintained deeply in their hearts, even though tough traditions and customs were against love. Love is a human phenomenon closely connected with life and which is expressed by a strong love. Moral concepts for love have not been the same in all the times. They have continuously changed according to the historic and social economic conditions. People stands above events, phenomena, but it is difficult to understand why he always protects the pure feeling, even when it is destructive for the individual, as the voice of love is the voice of life.

Love songs have deep romantic features and sometimes natural characteristics. This has influenced in some sensual verses. Nevertheless, in the center of attention, stands human, pure love

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distinguished for great sincerity. Romance of love songs deriving from dating difficult circumstances sometimes risky, because the young people could not freely see each other, is twinned with a deep feeling of courage, where the idea of true love is expressed.

In these lyrical songs there are intertwined syntactically philosophical, moral social and aesthetic concepts in a deeply sophisticated level.

The lyrical love and wedding songs are particularly endowed with these virtues.

These songs generally tend to focus at the interest for the intimate, familiar and social on the whole, for the universal and the personal, the objective and the subjective, the inner and outer aspect. This song can easily be integrated in all life recesses and can discover there interesting elements, but it can best penetrate in the deep recesses of human soul reflecting its most subtle vibrations.

This poetry, being in the meantime the nation's inner life chronicle, brings forth an entire poetical universe and important life aspects, where the intimate and public are intertwined in one.

This intertwining is the best demonstrated in love songs that are estimated as our folklore pearls.

The feeling of love is artistically embodied in a great number of songs, where it is reflected not only the rich inner world of the people, but it is as well contemplated on social relationships and moral standards. The fulfillment of love is an artistic testimony demonstrating the social restraint of love and the advancement of moral concepts on this feeling.

Ismail Kadare the well-known Albanian writer, in "The Folk Autobiography in Verse" says: "War and love are two most widespread motives in folk poetry. The feeling of love was generally a tragedy in one's life. It meant conflict with the society with the family, customs and everything. Mostly, the folk had not experienced love during his life, but in art he never reprimanded it. His particular perception lead him to understand that the feeling of love is related to the future, thus he assigned love a place that never truly corresponded to real life". [1]

Thus, the erotic songs, both as a reflection and poetic expression of the feeling of love, has mirrored a universe of ideas, customs different practices and beliefs, that constitute part of the aesthetic values and folk psychology.

One of the most beautiful aspects of this song is the description of the girl's portrait, which is always the core of emotional reminiscences. The description of the girl's being concise and magnificently syntactical in these sings, seldom is achieved through concentrating minutely in her physical appearance. In general a single metaphor or simile is enough for the folk author to produce in verse the power of beauty and the outbursts of passion resulting from it;

"O mëndafsh i hollë i hollë
U ende mollë më mollë"
"O fine, fine silk;
Wandering on apple trees"

In two verses only, there are included qualities such as frailty, tenderness, fragility, nobility, bravery, and inner purity. The epithet *"i hollë"* (fine) together with *"mollë" (apple)*, unfold an entire system of images which reveal not only the girl's beauty, but also the soul vibrations of the lyric subject.

The frailty of beauty is also expressed in the verse: *"Porsi manushaqja në mes të dëborës" (As the violet in midst of the snow)* showing that it can blossom even during hard and frosty times. Beauty can melt the snow and bringing the sun (love).

In these songs there are also verses dedicate to the eyes as being an omnipotent attribute of love.

Although the folk song describes love through all its stages, it is often perceived as a compassionate and depressing novel, as a soul grief. Love is often displayed through dramatizing and achieving.

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The most frequent nuances of these erotic songs are those of a deep intimacy and they reflect the subtlest sensations and perception of the soul. But when this love is repressed from the ambient, then there emerge the norms, customs, and biases, which create the marvelous bond between the intimate and the real. Here are some aspects in which the intimate is displayed in all its complexity:

- When it is depicted the reflection of the boy in love with the girl's beauty, which in turn provokes such a passion as to rekindle even the nature, the trees outburst in bloom, and the power of loves is transmitted to the whole universe: *"I will steal the beauty of your forehead, the white neck like pearls, like violet flower in spring, and like nightingale that sings in May"* [2]
- When it is depicted the intimate setting, where the boy and the girl meet for the first time a narrow street, a dim light (love at the beginning), on the mountain or mostly near a watercourse
- When love is kept secret, it is not reveled but is fled deep in soul. Both the girl and the boy meet each other, they blush, but they cannot speak.
- When it is depicted the pain of neglected love, which is reflected in these songs gracefully, as a noble feeling: *"From a foreign land I came, / I froze in the pick of summer / as you didn't come to say hi*" [3]

"The poor me, full of grief,
go to bed but I can sleep"

- When the girl asks gold jewelry from the boy as an indication of love, but the poor boy can only give his own soul as a guarantee.
- When both exchange oaths for faithfulness and duration of love: *"Girl, if you are my sweet heart, / when I'm dead, you must be a raven, /and cry for me valleys and plains"*
- When there are depicted the intimate erotic desires of the boy who imagines the girl as a snowball, a grouse, running water: *"Are you a pear or a quince, / if you are a quince, you are for me, / to kiss and love you, / to squeeze you like a lemon"* [4]
- When the girl's love passes through a fragile instant:

" Vajza majë shkëmbit
Si zogu majë gjembit"

"Girl standing top of the rock
As bird on top of the thorn"

It can immediately be felt the alarm, the call for being attentive, but it can even be perceived the deep sensitivity.

Within the intimae framework of these songs, one could notice no sign of vulgar immorality and sensuality. Everything is delicately constructed, with sincerity, fluidity which is considered with a wonderful poetic system.

Whereas the moment of the intertwining of the intimate and the public approaches when:

- He and she are distant, the wish and the longing for the girl are great. The boy wants to be near the girl, but the social environment represses his desires and passions: *"Over the quince trees, the nightingale sings, missing your grace"*
- An object of the nature (a symbol for the obstacle) conceals the girl's eyes from the boy.

The conflict between love and environment becomes sharp when the young man takes into account even death for the sake of love. As a result of this conflict, in some songs characterized by deep tragic tones, the death of the tow lovers is presented.

"I'll take the risk of death
To reach you by crossing over the wall"

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- When the boy and the girl come from different social strata, their love can not be realized.
- Very often love is surrounded by foggy, gossipy social environment which leads to tragic ends.

The two lovers decide to hide their love being afraid of the social environment

"We have to endure, girl, together
Just like the mountain that stands up under snow"

- The decisiveness of the boy to make his love known to the public is given time and again neglecting in this way social environment: *"Girl from Albania, bride from Greece, I abandoned my home, to kiss your lips"* [5]
- In some songs the constant worry (despair) caused by love is so great that the boy expresses it everywhere he goes, trying to comfort his longing for the beloved girl.

In general, we accept that this lyric as a whole would create a real romantic novel. Throughout it, we will clearly notice the respect for woman, the link between love and death, the delicacy of thought expression, the warmth of feelings but, surely, sincerity is never lacking.

No one would escape without noticing the warm lyricism that permeates these songs as well as the permanent reference towards nature.

A lot of symbols are well used as the apple (the symbol of love), the pear (the symbol of erotica), the basil (the beauty of love and youth), the nightingale (the symbol of the young man), the partridge (the symbol of the pretty girl) etc.

Love songs are presented in verses and different strophic forms with a metric rich which testifies the richness of the popular metrics. The 8-th and 6-th syllables are used mostly but the 4-th only in the refrain. The rhymes or the assonances are almost decisive and rarely one will find non rhythmical songs. In these songs we will find stylistic means such as repetition, anaphora, and apostrophe adapted for dances with distich and tercins. They remain the pearls of folk for the feeling and emotion they offer.

Wedding songs, like love songs bear original sensitivity and beauty. Wedding is the main spectacular performance our people have created in centuries which is characterized by a formality which is quite strange to the gloominess of the Canon, resentment, slavery, and savagery that accompanied girl's marriages in many cases.

If we refer the intimate moments of these songs, we would distinguish the wedding songs which describe pre-marriage situation, that is to say the time before the bride enters the husband's house. Whereas the other part of these song which constitute the greatest part in quantity treats the moment when the bride enters the new house and aspects of family life there, expressing in this way the intertwining of the intimate moments with the public ones.

The wedding ceremony is well processed, with clear arrangement where everyone knows well his own role. The conductor is the godfather. Throughout the wedding ceremony the pagan character is clearly seen, which is shown in the rites accompanying it. One of the most important traditions of the weeding week is the one concerning the bride bread. The bread was cracked on the bridge's head when she was crowned in the church or was put under the arm when she entered the groom's home. Another tradition was the rite of bride's decoration and groom's dressing which were accompanied with many songs. Sometime the weeding songs are characterized by melancholy. They are sung by bride's family members in her house.

Among songs with mainly intimate tones, we would distinguish these types:

- When the girl embroiders her wedding dress quite alone, staying late at under the candle light: *"Alone the flower in the room,/ alone keeps the chandelier,/ alone embroiders her dress"* [6]

The moment of the wedding has arrived. The bride devotedly prepares her own clothes experiencing at the same time (simultaneously) longing, desire, and emotions for the new life that is

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going to star soon. The word *"alone"* repeated in every verse line seems to emphasize the last moment of this loneliness.

- When the girl experiences the spiritual pain, anxiety and emotional strain in order to find the man of her dreams:

"In a fine glass water
As sugar girl is melted (dissolved)"

- When intimate moments of the girl's life before marriage are given.

A typical example is that of the boy passing by the girl's window. The girl is touched on the beauty. She eagerly wants to get engaged with him but he comes from a higher stratum and this marriage is impossible.

- When the girl impatiently wants to go to the boy's house and this is well expressed in her devotion preparing and decorating her clothes, or when she wants to become a butterfly, to cross over mountains, to forget her parents only to be closer to her beloved man: *"I'll leave my father running tom my husband"*

The description of these intimate moments very often bears inside the desires, emotions and the longing of the boy, too. In these songs we encounter moments such as:

- The boy's suffering for his beloved girl who immediately appears in her the wedding dress ready to marry another man.
- The impatience and emotion the boy experiences until his wife comes and lives in his house forever: "*45 knights, the groom ahead of them, / all carrying guns, all dressed in gold, / go to destroy Istanbul, /Don't destroy , son, Istanbul, / I'll destroy and ruin it , / till my bride appears"*
- The energy and determination of the bridegroom to take wife home sometimes against his parent's will.
- The bridegroom's passion to invite the guests and arrange the wedding ceremony in order to declare and prove the love he has for his wife.

From the other group of the wedding songs we clearly distinguished that the emotions come out beyond the intimate context and become collective expressing the mixture of a series of lyrical, poetic and ethnographic components. The rites and the traditional wedding customs are well integrated into emotions and feelings.

Worthy of mention are some moments such as:

- The moment when the bride leave her house, a moment which becomes a motive to express freely the anger and the built-up rage against the patriarchal order that has deeply rooted these harsh and savage relationships with the bride: "*I was married by my father, / too young to get married, / to a forty-year-old man, / poor me, only fifteen, / I prefer a young man, / to laugh and play"* [7]
- The girl's moment of suffering when she blames her parents for her so early, before reaching the marriage time.
- The moment when the friends come to accompany the bride is given with nostalgic tones for everything she leaves behind; especially her virginity is lost forever: "*Daughter, when you go to new home, / love and respect mother-in-law"*
- The moment when her mother gives advices to her daughter before she becomes a bride.

There are also songs that describe important moments from the traditional wedding ceremony:

- The girls send the bride to take a bath she gets dressed
- The girl receives her father' blessing
- The chickpea bread is prepared (a symbol of continuity) and the couple receives congratulations
- The mother- in- law gives golden jewelry to the bride as a sign of respect.
- The guests propose a toast by drinking *raki* and wine wishing all the best to the host and the new couple

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On Saturday morning the weddings gests together with the bride go to cut wood for the wedding and to bring home ”the green branch” which is decorated with red and white colors.

The majority of the songs are about the moments before and after the wedding where in an erotic atmosphere the feelings of the boy and girl are presented.

Some other songs treat the time after marriage touching these moments:

The girl comes back missing her father’s house, but also with a desire to go back to her husband’s house as soon as possible.

When the groom’s family and the people around praise the qualities of the bride and take it as an example or prove that the marriage has been successful.

In wedding songs as well as in love songs the portrait of the girl is the center of attention in the majority of songs but the portrait of the boy is not neglected too.

The figure describing bride’s beauty is clearly noticed the romantic character in the treatment of beauty. Bride is seen in general only as a beautiful human being, despite the fact that she was carrying the heavy burden of everyday life. Normally, weeding songs are short because they adopt the dynamism of weeding. They are also organized with 6, 7 and 8 syllables. The role of refrains is great giving songs liveliness in singing and dancing; “Our bride in dance over and over again”.

Being very important public ceremony the intertwining of the intimate with the public is more obvious in wedding songs than in love songs.

Conclusions

As a conclusion we can say that these songs create a universe of emotions, feelings, experiences, rituals and costumes combined with a wonderful freedom of expression and selected poetical language with always remain a treasure for our culture and art.

Poetic material of these songs with the original and realist concept makes us see in the depth of the verse and the message it transmits.

In these songs, the Albanians, even in the most difficult moments of their history, maintained and cultivated the emancipation tendencies which were connected with the European and democratic aspirations, traditions and civilization which were never lost but served as the essence for a complete popular art. The harmonic intertwining of the expression of intimate emotions with the collective one give these songs a wider breath and a deep emancipating character.

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