CHAPTER - V

, SANSKRIT GITS

OR

SONGS ASSOCIATED WITH RITES THE PASSAGE
The most important phases of human life are various rites that have to come across the process of life. Human life is most cultured of the world, is not only a simple biological progression from birth to death but also a social movement from one status and role to another. The occasion for passing from one such stage to another is marked by special ceremonies and festivities by rites of passages. The life of an individual in any society has to cross a series of passages from time to time. Among these passages the rites of first rice eating ceremony, the attainment puberty by a girl, the sudākarana or mundana, the upanayana or lagundiyā the marriage ceremony and finally the death are worth mentioning. The rites of passages current both in Assam and Bhojpur areas are observed by various rites.

Birth is the first rite of an individual. The Assamese Hindus observe some rites before the birth of a
child. Among these (i) Garbhadhārana (conception), (ii) Panca-

camrta, (iii) Sadhabhaksana (desired meal), (iv) Pumsavana

are worthmentioning.

I. (i) Garbhadhārana (conception):

The rite, by the performance of which a woman recei­
ves semen ejaculated (by her husband) is called a Garbhadhārana
or garbhadhān. In Bhojpur this rite is treated as a good
omen for the family. Near and dear ones visit the girl and
congratulate her. Neither any ritual is observed nor any song
is sung on this occasion either in Assam or in Bhojpur.

(ii) Pancamrta :

At the fifth month a pregnant woman is formally invi­
ted by the mother or sister-in-law accordingly reception with
Pancamrta, i.e., milk, curd, sugar, ghee and honey. A pair
of new cloth are also given to her.

The pregnancy rite is not observed in the Bhojpuri
society.

1 R.B. Pandey : Hindu Samskar, Socio-Religion Study of the
Hindu Sacraments, p. 39
(iii) Sadhabhaksana (desired meal):

This rite is observed in the 7th or 9th month of a pregnant woman. Although the rite is observed by both the high caste and the low caste people, yet the term Sadhabhaksana is usually not used. The term jeura or jeurīya is properly used in lower Assam. The main function of this rite is that the mother and relatives of the pregnant woman come to her house and receive her with curd, rice, fish, meat etc. Womenfolk sing auspicious songs in the context of this ritual. A specimen of this genre of folk song is given below.

Ghosa: devatā sakale bule priya bāni
sunore doibaki āi /
tomar garbhata jito putra achhe,
māribo kanisaya niscaya.

Pada: suka nigadati suniyoka pariksita /
rohini naksatra yeve bhailā upasthita //
parama sobhana kāla bhailā sibelata /
surabhi sita samangala bahe bātāh //
dasodisa prasanna nirmala tārāgana /
madhukare gunjare puspita dekhi bana //
prthivita samangala mīlī apāra //
nada-nadi prasanna pankaje jātiskāra//
bhaila mahā awasthā ati sajjanara mana  
akāsata stuti kare sidha muni gana  
asamkhyaṭa dundubhi svargaka chāni bāve  
opesvara nāce bidyadhare git gāve  
barisanta puspā deva-muni nirantare  
sagarar lagata garajanta jalandhara  
mañjārāti ati andhakāra bhaila khana  
sehi samayata upajilā nārāyana  

i.e., Suka, enthusiastic sage had been narrating the story of the birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa before King Parikṣita that embryo of Daivaki would kill notorious Kamsa. Lord Kṛṣṇa was born at midnight under the cover of darkness. In the presence of star Rohini and other beautiful galaxy of stars. The entire world was joyous. The sages prayed, while the fairies danced to the tune amidst the sound of the kettle drum that reached even the Heaven. This indicated that Lord Kṛṣṇa had his birth.

The practices of the Sādhabhāksana, i.e., (jewriya) or (jewra) are more or less similar to the Athwāsā or godbhāhārāni, which is current in Bhojpur. The Bhojpurī performs this rite to ensure the safety of the child in the mother’s womb.

---

2 P. Kalita: Ayatīr Uruli, pp.285-286
To perform this rite the women first dress themselves in red or yellow clothes. After this the family deities are worshipped. On this occasion some presents like dress and other things are also sent for the pregnant woman. Various folk songs are sung by the women folk in this context and one such song as a specimen is referred below:

\[
\text{mere alabele nada /} \\
\text{aba dhar sirahane baha //} \\
\text{mere bansa barhavana gaha /} \\
\text{gale bandhana darana hara //} \\
\text{jaba lage hai māsa aṁhāl /} \\
\text{piyā anna na bhāve pānti //} \\
\text{jab tisare māsa jo lāge /} \\
\text{tab māti mātil man lāge //}^3
\]

i.e., This song refers to an almost forgotten custom or sāṁskāra refers to in the way. This is performed when the child is of eight month in the womb of the mother. The song says the child should come towards the bed side to sleep on her hand. The unborn child is uncommon and he will continue the clan. So the mother is given some sort of garland in her

---

3 H. Tiwari: Gangā Ghati ki Git, p.75
neck. When the pregnancy is of two and half month the expectant mother does not like water. When she is pregnant of three months, she likes to sit on the soil and she does not feel very happy.

(iv) **Pumāsavana** (quicking a male child):

After the conception was ascertained, the child in the womb is consecrated by the *sāṁskāra* named **pumāsavana**. The rite through which a male child was produced is the general meaning of **pumāsavana**. In Assamese language it is known as **Puhanbiya**.

The **pumāsavana** rite is prevalent among the Brahmins in Assam to some extent. In this ceremony the woman and her husband are ritually dressed as bride and bride-groom, and the ritualistic ceremony is performed in accordance with the śāstric ways. The women folk sing songs associated with the marriage and they invoked God in favour of the couple and the issue in the womb of the woman.

A few songs are mentioned below as specimens:
In the eight month of Radha, puhanblya is performed by her husband (Krśna).

The loom was made by the grand father of the pregnant women and the gāri (loom roller) is made by her father. The elder brother has brought the thread and the mother has wove the sārī (saree, which is essential at the rite).

On the occasion of pūmsavana or puhanblya the pregnant woman smells the new leaves of the banyan tree. The description and function of the leaves of the same is mentioned in the following song.

bat kuhl bat kuhl
tai bar bat kuhl
achilā batare gāche

4 A.D. Barkataki: Biya-nām, p.106
5 Informant: Bimala Devi (75), Patacharkuchi,
Data collected on 3-11-96
The soft leaves of banyan tree was on the branch.
The soft leaves have been plucked by singing auspicious songs and making Uruli sound to have the smell for the bride.

If the bride does not sneeze or cough at the time of taking smell of the soft leaves of Banyan tree, it is believed that she will give birth to a male child. The following sung reveals this idea:

barare gachare konāl kuhipāt
achile barare āge /
dhole dogāre ādari āniche
rukminik sungāba lāge //

The soft leaves of Banyan tree is in the tree itself. It has been brought to have the smell of the same by Rukmini.

The Magur fish is essential in the rite of Puṣamsavana. Both the bride and the groom should touch the pair of Magur fishes. After the function of Puhanbiyā is over the pair of

---

6 Informant: Padma Devi (72); Patacharkuchi.
Data collected on 3/11/96

7 A.D. Barkakati (Op-cit., P-106)
Magur fishes are then free in the water of a pond or a river. The following song is sung at the rite associated with the Magur fish.

māi lāre māgur māch jor /
bāpul āche chāi //
pūhānare māgur māch jor /
chilanake jāi //

i.e., The bride is touching the pair of Magur fishes and the bridegroom is enjoying this beautiful scenery. But the pair of fishes will not be stay there, in no time it will be taken for bath.

2. Oral Songs Associated with the Rite of Childhood:

(a) Jatakarama (Birth ceremony):

Birth is the first rite of an individual. The birth of a child is very impressive scene. The women give information to all about the birth of a child, with a vocal sound known as 'Uruli'. After the birth of a child one expert woman

---

Informant: Minati Devi (49); Pathsala, Data collected on 4/11/96
or dhāl or nurse separates the baby from the mother's tie which is known as nārikāṭā. Then the child is fed honey.

The birth of a child is always associated with joy and marriment. In Assam usually no songs are sung in this context. But now-a-days some groups of women observe a rite on the fifth day of the child birth by chanting names of Gods for the welfare of the newly born baby in some places of undivided district of Kamrup. These are related to the birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The following song is generally sung in this context:

\[
\text{āji madhya rāti sīla barasile} / \\
\text{nusūno prajāre mat} // \\
\text{pālī pahāriyā save ndrā goilā} / \\
\text{upajilā jagannāth} //
\]

i.e., Jagannāth or Kṛṣṇa was born at mid-night amidst great thunder when every was in deep.

Another specimen of this type of songs, sung in this context is given below:

9 Informant: G. Kalita (75); Chhaygaon (Kamrup), Data collected on 1-5-96
Knowing that Kṛṣṇa has incarnated in the form of Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva took bath with clothes in the holy water of the Ganga and had donated ten thousand cows to the Brahmins.

The rite associated with Jāatakrama is known as Sohar in Bhojpur. The term Sohar carries the meaning of welfare or bless. As such it can easily be assumed that the rite which is performed for the welfare of the pregnant is called Sohar. And the songs which are sung in this context are also called Sohar-git.

For separation of the child from mother's tie a chamārīn (a woman of particular caste) is informed. She comes on the right time and performs her duty very sincerely and carefully. It is compulsory rite to ring a dish at the time of child birth. No body is allowed to enter the room where the pregnant woman delivers the child except the chamārīn (Dhai). Like the Assamese families, the Bhojpuri family at

10 Informant : G. Kalita(75), Chhaygaon,(Kamrup), Data collected on 3/5/96
the time of child birth keep burning fire in an earthen
vessel so as to prevent evil spirits and ghosts from enter-
ing the room and doing harm to the new born baby. For burning
the fire generally 'Chaff' is used. The Chamārin at least
two times visits the mother and the baby and takes care of
them. The Chamārin (Dhāl) continues her service for a minimum
of twelve days. On the sixth day, the new born baby is taken
out for a formal bath and the child puts on new clothes. The
rite is called chhathī-samśkār. Similarly on the twelveth day
one another rite is observed called Barahl-samśkār in Bhojpur.
After the Barahl-samśkār, the Chamārin (Dhāl) is released
giving her some presents such as money and clothes.11

Love is the subject matter of Sohār-songs. Here lies
the description of sexual inter-course between husband and
wife, pregnancy etc. along with comprehensive male child,
relief of pains of a pregnant woman. For example a specimen
of the Sohār-song is given below in which reveals the pathetic
feelings of a pregnant woman:

11 K.D. Upadhyaya: Bhojpuri Lok-gīts Kā Adhyayana, p. 161
The above mentioned song describes the feelings and reactions of the pregnant women at the time of delivery.

Generally during delivery the woman feels terrible body ache and pain and gets anxious to give birth to the child. In her anxiety she seeks the presence of her husband who has been the cause of this pain and anxiety.

In certain songs the description of the pathetic feelings of a childless barren woman are reveals:

jeisana ban me ke koiriyā, bane-bane kuhukela ho /
e rām aisana jiyaṛā hamār kuhukelā, ekare bālak binu ho//
jeisana boraśi āga have dhire-dhire sunugela ho /
aise jiyaṛā hamār sunugela, ekare bālak binu ho //

— Here the poet talks about the mental agony of a barren woman, her heart is kept cooling like the cuckoo in the jungle.

12. Ibid., p. 164
She always craves for a child. The poet refers to a brazier which keeps burning slowly and slowly in the same way the heart of the woman keeps burning with great eagerness to have a child of her own.

Khelawalā is considered as the another category of Sohar-songs, which are sung in a situation fully dominated by moments of joy of birth of a male child. But there are certain differences between the two. In Sohar-songs, description relates to a stage, immediately preceding to birth of a male child. In the songs of Khelawalā description relates to the pains at the time of delivery, the treatment and behaviour displayed towards the pregnant woman by the other members of the family. Following lines of the song is given below in which reveals the feelings of the family member towards a pregnant woman:

\[ jāhu \text{ tora e bhawji horilā hoile,} \]
\[ \text{tobe albi tora angānawā} / \]
\[ \text{nathiya bhi lebo, jhulni bhi lebo,} \]
\[ \text{lebo jarāu kanganawā} / \]
\[ \text{kantha bhi lebo, tikā bhi lebo,} \]
\[ \text{lebo sab sonā ke gahanava} ~/^{13} \]
i.e., The sister-in-law do everythings for her bhābhi, i.e., pregnant woman. For this she hopes to get something from her. Expressing her desire she said her bhābhi if she gives birth of a male child then she will take from her some presents such as clothes, ornaments etc.

Although there is no birth song in Assamese society like bhojpuri society nevertheless at the birth day of a male child, a rite is observed in some localities of Assam. The rite is known as Pachati. Generally the Pāchati celebration is observed in connection with the birth rite of Lord Kṛṣṇa which is celebrated annually at the fifth day of the Kṛṣṇastami. However the Pachati may performed in connection with the birth rite of any human male child. The rite is generally associated with songs which are also sung on the occasion of the Pachati-rite of Lord Kṛṣṇa. One such song is given below as a specimen.

Dihā: ālo bhāl gokule udaya vadumani/
      ānande nander pure chānī //

Pada: gopā-gopī āsiyā harise /
      kṛṣṇara sīre kusuma barise //
haladhl qorasa māla bharl/
since ranga karī /
mota jale sarira bhijāyā /
ranga nāche yata gopa jāya //
krṣṇa yosodār mukha cāl /
prem bhāve nayana jurāi //

i.e., O brother, yadumani, i.e., Kṛṣṇa is born at Gakula.
The people of the city Nanda besmear with boundless rejoice.
Both the male and the female cowherds come and begin to
shower with flowers on the head of Kṛṣṇa. Being delighted
both the milkmen and the milkmaids start play themselves
with milk and turmeric mixed water. They gaze and gaze upon
the beautiful face of Kṛṣṇa.

(b) Nāmākarana (Name giving ceremony):

The custom of Nāmākarana is observed by every Hindu
to give a name to the newly born child. In the context of
Nāmākarana songs are sung by the women folk in some areas
of Assam.

āhilā garga rai
gakule harisī

14 P. Bhattacharyya: Asamar Lok-Utsava, pp.54-55
Krṣna ganaṁ dekhi /
garge ahilā abhyantare gollā.
'suna ol yosedā rānī // 15

e.g.: The sage Garga has come to baptize (offer name) Krṣna and for this the people of Gakul have participated in the function.

In Bhojpur also the process of name giving to the new born child is found. But no song is sung in this context.

(c) Annapraśana (first feeding):

Feeding of a child with solid food is the next important stage in the life of the child. So long he was fed on the mother’s milk, but after six or seven months its body developed and required greater amount and different type of food. The feeding ceremony should be performed in the six month after birth. If postponed it is observed within the eighth or nineth, or tenth month. The rite may be performed in accordance with either the vedic order or the popular way means without śṛdha or homa. On that auspicious day the maternal uncle is invited and the child is fed by him. The

15 Informant: P. Dew (34), Patbausi, data collected on 6/8/96
rite is always associated with oral songs. Some oral songs of this genre are given below:

bāmun āhīlā nimantran pāiyā
sāji dilā dunighat ānīlā belarpāt
    bahīche ṣivanāth /
dhuyaibā charan dilanta āsan
    guruk dharilā mān /
sugandhi chandan divya bastra khān
    a pindhīlā Raghunandān // 16

i.e., The priest is invited and he has already come. His feet have been washed and has adorned by the father of the child. The priest puts on new cloths donated by the father of the child.

The tradition of song associated with the annaprasana is prevalent in Assam. Such songs are sung by the womenfolk of the undivided district of Goalpara is given below:

he re chāyār māmā
bhābiyā karim ki /
ānā khuyābā lāge
sajīā āmāre tui /

16 Informant: As in the reference No. 10
phāgun māsher sukla pakshe
subha lagne jāni /
āji chāyak anna khuyāi
purahit āni //\textsuperscript{17}

i.e., O maternal uncle; why are you thinking? please
feed the baby. Let the priest be invited on the day of the
full moon in the bright-half of the month of Falguna to
offer the anna to the baby.

The tradition of annaprāsana is current in the
Bhojpur areas, but the rite seems to be not related with
any kind of oral songs sung by the women folk.

(d) Cudā-karana (Tonsure);

The rite Cudā-karana is observed particularly by
the Brahmin and the Kayastha families in Assam. The Cudā-
karana ceremony takes place at the end of the first year or
before the expiry of the third year. An auspicious day is
fixed for the performance of the Cudā-karana. In the begin-
nning preliminary ceremonies e.g., Samkalpa, worship of Ganesh,

\textsuperscript{17} Lila Gogot: \textit{Asamīya Loka Sāhityar Rūprakha}, p.208
Manqala Sraddha etc., are performed. The child is bathed by the mother, puts on it a new garment which had not yet been washed. The father does Sraddha etc. After doing necessary functions the father will first cut the hair of the child. Then after the shaver shaves its head with the razor. The most striking characteristic of the prayer cited in this ceremony is that they were meant for long life of the child. Thus the ceremony is performed particularly the Brahmin and the Kayastha with sastric rite and singing of folk songs. The women folk sing songs in various stages of the rite such as the bathing of the boy, at the shaving of the hair, at the time of adhivāsa and during the Homa. Some songs are meant for invoking the supreme power to save the boy from all kinds of danger. The women folk attack both the barbar and the priest, such songs are always humorous. One such song is given below as a specimen:

```
karpera āhili datuwā napīt ai /  
ai rām khuraro nejānā juti he //  
jene tene kari ebar khūrāli /  
ai rām lagar lagariyāk sudhi he //
```
napitar uthil jvara, kethadi dhaki dhar /
aí ram, aí-baí, bapai aí kare he //
gachar khoronate aichil napit aí /
aí ram kukurare dima khali he //
* * * * * * *
kino napit kino rup /
bhim kalar guri yen kakalor got //18

i.e., Oh worthless barbar, where have you come from?
The rajor that you have brought is good for nothing. Some how you manage to shave once. The barbar is suffering from fever, cover him with a quilt or rags. Oh barbar, you live at the hole of a big tree. He eats eggs of hen. He is so beautiful that his waist is as large as a big plantain tree (bhimkal). Another song of this genre is given below, which is sung at the time of bathing:

Pada: sarute achi lá bámunar batu /
pach bacharat charilá garu //
garur dalale bulilá aí /
mor chuva chuli pelová nái //
sakal fule fulli ache, nái fula tagar /
bhäl kari chuli kätä pagala sankar //

18 H.K. Sarma (ed); Kāmrūpi Loko gīti Sangraha, p.105
The child is the son of a Brahmin. He acted as a cowherd at the age of five, he uttered the word 'ai' when he was amidst herd of cows; his impure hair is not shaved till now. The barbar is advised to shave the hair carefully. After the act of shaving curd is smeared on his head. Now he is asked to go near the planted banana tree for a ceremonial bath.

The rite of gudakarana is prevalent in Bhojpur. In Bhojpur it is known as mundan-samskār. This samskāra is observed at the 3rd, 5th, and the 7th years. It is considered irreligious if hair of the new born child is not dressed with the stipulated period specified above. Mundan-samskāra is instituted on a sacred day in a temple or like places. The women assemble in the place and sing songs. Those who perform on the bank of the river Ganga, they prepare a boat to go from one bank to another. This process is called Ganga-arohan.

As soon as the barbar proceeds to shave the child's head the

19 S. Devi: Nam-Amrtaś, pp. 60-61
20 K.D. Upadhyaya: Op-cit., p. 166
women folk pray to the God Indra by singing for not showering rainfalls:

mora pchuarla tetria la chachan bichan bhaile he/
tohitare tharha kaban fuə, deva se ara ja kare he //
jani deva lab jariā bādar, jani deva barisahu he /
āju ham jaibo kaban bhoiya he angan, kaban barua ke
muran he//
chaukahing baithālā kaban barua, fuə fuə kare he he /
kahe gaili kiā bhoile kaban fuə, lapari parishasu he//

The provision of giving oil on the head of the boy before shaving the hair is found both in Assam and Bhojpur. The songs associated with this rite are seen in both the regions. The Assamese women sing the undermentioned song in this context, viz:

dehi al bāpure murate/
dehi al pātaku dhariche //
dehi mor lecheri bāpuke tel dibā lāgi /
dehi al dubarīre āge //
dehi al tel diche /
dehi al lecheri kesar āge khāl //

21 K·D. Upadhyaya : Bhojpurī Lok-Sahitya ka Adhyayan, p.167
22 Informant : J. Devi (30): Chhaygaon, Data collected on 1-4-96
A stone is kept on the head of the boy. A vessel full of scented oil is being held before the boy to glare on his head.

(karnavedha) (performation of the earlobes):

The tradition of the karnavedha for wearing ornaments is prevailing among savage people all over the world. So its origin is very ancient. This ceremony should be performed before the appearance of the teeth of the child. The sixth, the seventh, the eighth, and the twelfth month is suitable period for karnavedha. In the folk society of Assam it is popularly known as kanbindhowa. At present this is one of the important rite among the women particularly in Lower Assam.

In the Bhojpuri society also the karnavedha-samskar is performed. Even male persons also boring of their ears. But provision of singing songs is not prevalent in both Assam and Bhojpur.
3. **Songs associated with Initiation rite**:  

(i) **Upanayana**: Upanayana is one of the most important rites among the Brahmins of both the regions. The term **Lagundiyani** or **Lagundeni** is also current among the village folk.

The term 'upanayana' means imparting of knowledge.

In the *Satapatha Brahmana*, the word 'upanayana' is used in the sense of taking charge of a student.\(^23\) The term is used to convey the sense of the initiation of the child by a teacher to a sacred lore.

In the *Sutra-period* the proposal of student for study and its acceptance by the teacher is the central point in the *Samāskāra*.\(^24\) Another authority explains the meaning of the term *upanayana* and in this connection observes: 'the rite through which a man is initiated into the vows of the Guru, the Vedas, the restraints observances and the vicinity of God is called *upanayana*.'\(^25\)

In the latest development of the *samāskāra*, its educational sense has departed altogether. Now the word is used in the sense of a ceremonial purpose which is performed before the marriage of a twice born. It is a ceremony in which a boy

---

23. *Satapatha Brahmana*, xi, 15/4  
24. R. Pandey: *Hindu Samāskaras*, p.115  
25. Ibid., p.116
is invested with the sacred thread. 26

The *yapanayana* ceremony prevalent among the Assamese Hindus starts with *adhibasa*. It is followed by the rite *dayân-diya*, which is associated with few oral songs. These songs are sung by the women folk, e.g.,

```
uthā uthā srikr̥ṣṇa nuthile nahaya/
yajna sutra paridhānar halehi samaya//
bāhirate purahit kusa bidhi lai /
āyati sakale sīmha duwarate roi //
diba khoje subha dayān uthi lāhe kari /
tomar mātr roi āche dadhi dhari //
```

i.e., Srikrsna, gets up, it is the time for wearing *yajña-sutta*. The priest is waiting out side. The women are waiting to offer *dayân* at the gate. You get up, your mother is waiting taking milk and curd in her both hands.

All the time of the *nāndimukha* *sraddha* oral songs are also sung. One song of this genre is given below as a specimen:

26 H. Goswami (ed.): *Biya-nām*, p. 109
27 Ibid., p. 109
Munje- grasses are spreading in a row. The bark of banana tree is placed. Rice is poured on the bark of banana tree by the performer of the śradha.

After śradha Homa is performed in the context of upanayana. Songs are associated on this occasion also. e.g.,

bārīr āmekhāri kāto cheve dhari /
kapili garure ghiu //
keloi nālāgā agnidevata /
lekhar pāchpova ghiu //
āmar juye homar juye /
bāpur pure hīya //
Rāmbhadra Balabhadra /
dhimāi dhimāi diyā //

i.e., To appease the God Agni, branches of mango tree are torched, pouring ghee of cow which seems to burn the hurt of the novice, so Balabhadra and Rambhadra are asked to reduce the flame of the fire.

28 Informant : K.Devi(55), Barpeta, Data collected on 5/6/96
29 H. Sarma : Kāmrupi Lōkjīti Saṅgrah , 113
Then the novice proceeds to the achārya and announces his intention to be come a Brahmachārī. The achārya offers him clothes for the sake of long life. After it, the novice begs from his mother and from other related women. Songs are sung at the time of begging. One such song is as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
duwārate thīyā hoi ātabelī chāo / 
 bhīksā diyā mātr devī gurūr kāśe yāo // 
 sunare putalā bāchā bhīksā dio lovā / 
 danda-chatra kāndhāt loiyā mātṛ kōlāt bohā // 
 āi mātr bhīksā diyā bāmunak bāro / 
 Guru daksinā maï kībā dibā pāro // 
 āi mātr bhīksā diyā bāmunak bāro / 
 bhīksā māgi māgi āmi guru sevā karo //
\end{align*}
\]

i.e., The novice is waiting at the door. He is asking his mother for alms. The mother gives him alms and asked him to sit on her lap with stick and umbrella on his shoulder. The novice wants to donate the Brahmin through begging. Only through begging he wants to satisfy or to repay the debt of the Guru.

Now the novice wants to proceed for an educational mission. But he is persuaded by promising a bride or to make

30. Ibid., pp.113-114
provision of study at his residence. He is persuaded through
the following song:

\[
\text{ebāpu brahmachārī o kharāmate bhari /} \\
\text{e nayābā bairāqi hoi e //} \\
\text{oh, bāpu mainā āhi dim kainā /} \\
\text{nayābā bairāqi hoi //} \\
\text{oh : bāpu rsigane aqūrhi yāi /} \\
\text{anībo pitēke dhari e //} \\
\text{mure chātā dhari, yovā khar kari /} \\
\text{pitēke anībo dhari he //} \\
\text{oh : ahā bāpu bairāqi nahāba /} \\
\text{toke pūhrām āmi he //31}
\]

Oh novice, you are a brahmachārī, you are wearing
wooden sandal. Do not leave the house or do not become asce-
tic. You will get a good bride. At that moment the father
says that the brahmachārī should not leave the house because
he will also be provided with the facility of study.

Songs are also sung by the womenfolk at the time of
whispering Gayatri-mantra in the ear of the child. A specimen
of this genre of songs is as follows:

31 P. Kalita: Āvātir Uruḷi, p.246
The novice request his guru to teach his Gayatri mantra. Kasyapa is teaching Gayatri mantra to the novice by remembering the devaguru. The novice is taught Gayatri by covering cloths. And he is giving navaguna.

After performing the aforesaid rite, the novice is taken to have the ceremonial bath by his mother and other related women under the planted banana tree. He is bathed from the pure water of eight pitchers amidst the sound of Uruli and oral songs is sung by the women folk.

Similarly among the Hindus of Bhojpur, the rite upanayana is performed in the sastric way. Upanayana is known as 'janew' in the Bhojpuri society. Every rites of Janew (upanayana) is associated with the folk songs. Women folk

32 S. Devi(ed.): Nam-Anita, p.56
Sing various songs in different stages of the rite; such as, at the time of holy bathing and wearing girdle and sacred thread, during the period of rounding for alms and so forth. Song is a kind of prayer. In these songs, specific reference is also made to various activities to be undertaken in a particular samaskāra. In certain other songs, specific mentions about asking or praying for gifts by brahmachārī (novice) from addressing her as mother, going in for acquiring knowledge to either Kashmir or Kashi etc.  

In the last part of jenew (upanayana), various songs are sung. The following lines are given below as a specimen which are sung at the time of begging:

\[
\text{tāhi bane chalale kavan bābā kalele paras danda /} \\
\text{khojele ṭgasāla, homāra dulamba ke jenew //} \\
\text{kabani suhaiya sut keteli bhala oteli /} \\
\text{purele kaban rām jenew kaban baruā pahirāsu //} \\
\text{**** **** **** **** ****} \\
\text{purele suruṭa ram jenew umā barua pahirasu //}^{34}
\]

i.e., The palas stick, the mṛga chāl, the lagun (sacred thread) are collected from a sacred place for jenew of the

34 K.D. Upadhyaya & R. Sanskrityaya (ed): Hindi Sāhitya Ka Bīrāt Itihās, p. 112
child. This is Ram's jenew, Janaki cuts sutas.

At the time of begging taking the stick palāsh is a custom of Bhojpuri society which is mentioned in the above song.

In the same way after completion of the rite the novice comes back and remains standing on the door of the main house. This is also found in a few songs. The specimen given below indicates the same.

Kāsiye desabā se, abēla a bāruā /
are kharā bhile, kavan gām dulār he //
a māi, kate dale, kate chale, aila re bāruā /
bhikhabe na lele bāruā, na chorele, dulār he //
kasibe desabā re, abēla bāruā /
kharā bhayele, kaban bābā ke dulār he //35

e.g.: Here the Brahmachāri after the sacred thread ceremony has come from Kāshi seeking alm from a lady. As he come from a far he wants it quickly. But there is some delay in giving alms, so he refuses to accept it. The lady of the house asks him why it so.

(ii) **Puberty**;

Having attained physical maturity at about the age of eleven or twelve years a girl generally attains first puberty. After attaining puberty the girl will be in a separate place. The girl is to observe fasting for a few days for the first time. A ceremony is performed after the fourth day in which only women can participate. On that day girl is bathed ceremonially by her mother and in that context the women folk sing songs merriment.

The most popular and accepted Assamese term to suggest the meaning of the word puberty is *talanibiyā* or *śanti-biyyā*. In Lower Assam the terms like *dhuwani* or *dāngarhowā* is also used in lieu of the term puberty. Songs are sung by the women folk in the different stages in this rite. A song sung at the time of keeping *jāpā* is given below:

rahilare jāpā saru kāti jāpā bandheati /  
rahilare, jāpā yāy nagar chāti, he Ram //  
rahilare rāstār kāsat āhat gāchat /  
rahilare, duti sonār paksi, he Ram //  
rahilare, si paksi ujār kāila /  
rahilare, gājir bhamak dekhi; he Ram //
rahilare, khuve loi ahicho, alār pithā-guri/
rahilare, dhuve loi ahicho bhāri, he Ram //³⁶

i.e., Japā are tied tightly which spreads the massage along while moving through. The golden birds staying at the āhat tree (peepal) have flown away having seen the Gāji and the contents there in. We have come feeding grindings of unboiled rice, washing the feet.

Another song is given below as a specimen of this genre which is sung at the time of ceremonial bathing:

chāri pine kalarpali tāte āmār pali /
āi-devi snān kare jay Durgā buli //
āi-dewar padulit hālī āche nal /
kalahe kalahe dhāle jamunāre jal //
gā-dhul āi-devi māthāt diche hāt /
svarāg parā chiri krsnaī dile pārijāt //
gā-dhul āi-devi kampe thar-thari /
ānicho pātar bastra pindhā lāhe kari //
gā-dhul āi-devi Gangā khune bar /
janame janame svāmi habo Raghubar //³⁷

---

³⁶ H. Sarma: Kamrupi Lokgīti Saṅgrah, p.118
³⁷ P. Kalita (ed.): Ayatīr Uruli, pp.207-08
i.e., The girl takes her bath beneath the banana tree uttering the name of goddess Durgā. Pitcher's full of Yamunā-water being poured on the head of the girl. The girl has been blessed by Lord Kṛṣṇa with Pārijāt flower. Then she puts on a new clothes made of Pāt offered by her father.

The puberty is not regarded as a common and traditional rite in Bhojpur. Only a section of people are observing this rite simply. When a girl attains puberty, in Assamese society elaborate rites are observed, but in Bhojpuri society, no such elaborate rites are observed. They simply observe the minimum formalities. The girl has not have to observe any fasting. Even the girl's family if so desires, can observe any ritual, festival or religious ceremony during that period also. The tradition of singing song is not prevalent in the Bhojpuri society. After sacred bath the girl is dressed with a new dress. Then after she offer worship (pray) the God sun, offering Him with water, flowers, incense etc.
4. Oral songs Associated with the rite of Betrothal and Marriage:

Marriage is the most important rite in human life. Every stage of the marriage ceremony is associated with marriage songs. Noted folklorist P. Goswami, observes, "At every stage of the celebration from the early negotiation to the end, women sing appropriate songs. The Assamese marriage songs are composed and sung by the women folk and are sung on different occasions appropriately. At the time of ring ceremony, at the time of telar-bhār or joran, i.e., the ceremony of wearing ornaments, at the time of sacred bathing of both the bride and the bride-groom by sanctified water, at the time of Sraddha when the bride sits with companion after bathing, when the bride-groom goes to the bride house with procession, when the bride-groom is greeted at the gate, when the pair round the altar, when the Satapadi rite is performed and finally the girl is ritually offered, in all these stages the womenfolk sing various marriage songs accordingly. After the marriage is over the girl is taken away by the bride-groom, a gloomy sadness prevails in the house of the father of the bride. At the return both the bride and bridegroom are generally welcomed by the womenfolk.

38 P. Goswami: Folk Literature of Assam, p. 59
at the bridegroom's house by singing various songs.

In Bhojpur also the marriage rites are performed according to the vedic laws. The Bhojpuri people treat the marriage rite as an important rite in their life cycle. Like the Assamese marriage custom the Bhojpuri society also follow the pre-nuptial, nuptial and post-nuptial customs in the similar way. Another similar feature is the singing of different marriage songs in every stage of the ceremony. Songs associated with the marriage ceremony in Bhojpuri society can be classified into two classes:

1. **Kanyā paksā-ki-gīt**, i.e., songs of bride's party.

2. **Bar paksā-ki-gīt**, i.e., songs of bridegroom's party.

In Bhojpur the father or brother of the bride will go for searching bridegroom. Before selecting, he wants to know everything about the bridegroom and his family. The horoscopes of both of the bride and bridegroom will compare and when everything is found correct a proposal will be given to the father of bridegroom. After finalising the proposal the father of the bridegroom will ask for wealth and money. This is known as **tilak**. An amount of money and a pair of betel-nut are to be
given from the bride's side in an auspicious day. This process is called bar rakshā. Then after a suitable date is fixed for tilak. The father and brother along with other relatives of the bride will go to the bridegroom’s house. The brother of the bride will give tilak. On that day a suitable date is fixed for the marriage. From that day some marriage songs are sung in both the parties at their houses up to the marriage day.

i) Pre-nuptial songs:

After formal selection of the bride and the bridegroom by the gurdians of both the parties an auspicious day is fixed for wedding in consultation with the astrologer or the priest. If there is a gap between finalisation and the date of wedding then a rite is observed from groom's side which is called anguthi pindhowā, i.e., ring ceremony. On this occasion a day is fixed and a group of people visit the bride's house and ceremonially put on one gold ring to the bride as a symbol of finalisation of marriage. Women sing songs on this occasion. A specimen of such song is reproduced here:

yabāno allā kok he logari
yābano allā kok
O friend, where are you going? where are you going?
The bee have made the be-hive on the tree of au-lrenga. The elder is requested to collect honey from the bee-hive. Sister-in-law is the daughter of others. What affection is expected of her? Oh, friend! mother is also not found, do not be harsh, oh dear sister-in-law, we are just like resting bee.

Similarly in Bhojpur the rite Chhakā-dharā or Bar-rakhā is observed for the finalisation of a bride-groom. From the view point of subject matter the rite Chhakā-dharā or Bar-rakhā and Aiguthipindhowā, i.e., ring ceremony is similar. Difference only that in Assam the bridegroom comes along with his friends to finalise the bride while in Bhojpur

39 P. Kalita (ed.): Ayatīr Uruli, 112
the father or elder brother comes to groom's house along with his friends and relatives to finalise the groom. For this he gives an amount of money and pair of betel-nut to groom. On various occasions of Chhaka-dharā or Bar-rakha songs are sung.

Then after suitable date is fixed for tilak. Tilak is a curse for the poor family in Bhojpuri society. On that very day of tilak, the father and the brother along with other relatives go to the bridegroom's house. In the bridegroom's house on that day a great function is organised with much pomp. The neighbours and relatives are invited to a dinner organised on the tilak-day. On the night on an auspicious moment, the brother of the bride offers the arranged dowry consisting of money and materials to the bride-groom and puts a holy mark on the forehead of the bridegroom. On that day a suitable day is fixed for marriage. Thus the tilak ceremony is come to an end. On various occasions of Chhaka-dharā and tilak songs are also sung. A specimen of the song is given below which is sung in the context of tilak.

---

40 K.D. Upadhyaya: Bhojpuri Lok-gīt-kā-Adhyayan, p. 178
i.e., who is he, where from he has come to give tilak. Who is that king, who is that pandit to come to give tilak. All are looking to him and are satisfied.

He who give tilak says that Gaurī (bride) is given to the bride, so there is nothing to give anything.

Next important rite of Assamese pre-nuptial marriage is telor-bhār or joran. Telar bhār means load of oil. But in general it carries a heavy demandable load including clothes, ornaments, and varieties things of dressing such as oil, scent, vermillion, powder, comb, looking glass and so forth. The function is observed in brides house just one day or two days before

41 H. Tiwari & R. Sarma (ed.): Op-cit., p. 186
the marriage day. For this telar-bhār is sent from the groom's house. The women from the groom's party carried the telar-bhār along with the telar-bhār they also carry the fish, curd, sweets and a bunch of betel-nut and a pair of coconuts. They perform the rite ritually and the songs are also sung in this context.

One of the songstresses addressing her companions:

O my dear lady, carry this curd, milk, ghee and honey/
(For) at choudhyry's house is a maid as lovely as

the pomgranate/

we wanted a ripe pomgranate but you give a bel /
we require scented oil, to put in the telar bhar /
This ari fish wriggles so, it might heart our fingers/
It will go in the telar bhar along with the ornaments/
our maid splits arela in the form of sengari flowers/
She is born of respectable parents /
Hearing of her our young man has sent these ornaments

Today is telar bhar, tomorrow is his marriage.
His father is sitting amidst a number of persons.
Going there you will find the gate of Rukmini and

then put down the telar bhar.

Rukmini would ask whose it is: Say from Dwaraka

has it been sent /42

42 P. Goswami Folk Literature of Assam, p. 59
The above specimen gives a glimpse of several aspects of the folk-culture of the Assamese people.

After the arrival of telār-bhār or joran at bride's house, the women of the bride's party sing the following song:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{āgar khan bhārate ki ki ānichā} & / \\
\text{bhar charār makhate thova} & // \\
\text{pichar khan bhārate ki ki antchā} & / \\
\text{rāļjar āgatē kowā} & // \\
\text{khāru loi āhichā mani loi āhichā} & / \\
\text{aru loi āhichā kii} & // \\
\text{golāpti sendurar dhup loi} & / \\
\text{āhichā janak mahārājār jee} & // \\
\text{manar alamkār thovā kāti kari} & / \\
\text{deutār alamkār thovā} & // \\
\text{Rama di pathaiche bicitra alamkār} & / \\
\text{hāte jor kari lova} & // 43
\end{align*}
\]

What have you bought in the former bhār? Keep it at the gate of the main house. What have you bought in the letar bhār, display it to the public. Have also bought rosy coloured vermilion, bangles, pears and what have been bought by you? Have accompanied the daughter of king Janaka? Leave

---

43 Informant: Runu Bala Phukan(55); Jorhat, Data collected on 20/7/96
aside the ornaments of your parents. Ram has sent the varieties of ornaments and accept it with folded hand.

Similarly this rite is observed in Bhojpur society at the very beginning of the marriage day. When the bridegroom along with his friends and relatives arrives bride's house, he is welcomed and worshipped at the gate. In Bhojpur it is called dwārpūjā. After dwārpūjā he along with his party is seated in a particular place known as janabāsā. Then after they are invited to a arranged place for dinner. On that very moment the rite Kannyānirikṣan is ritually performed in the mandap (pandel) by the elder brother of bridegroom's. Kannyā-nirikṣan is similar to Assamese telar-bhār. Here the elder brother of the bridegroom's gives cloths and ornaments to the bride by touching her hands. In some area of Bhojpur it is called gurhathī. From that day the elder brother of the bridegroom will never touch the bride. Songs are also sung in this context.

ii) Marriage Songs:

On the marriage day just after the ceremonial bath of both the bride and the groom śrāddha of nine past generation is performed. In this context the Assamese marriage songs are
composed and sung by the women folk. A specimen of song is given below:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ki pūje gahe pūje /} \\
\text{hatir murat uthi he //} \\
\text{taruā kadam mālā, bangaliyā dhuti he /} \\
\text{ki pūjā kare Arun chadheri he //} \\
\text{baranar pīrāte bahi he /} \\
\text{bāhi phul laba //} \\
\text{yī yent phul lāge /} \\
\text{dāder āgat kabā //} \\
\text{kalā rangā bagā phule /} \\
\text{ājali bharilā //} \\
\text{ṣagarare jala āni} \\
\text{a chantā karilā} \\
\text{ekpāṭī tulasīrī gāhe pūjilā //45}
\end{align*}
\]

God is worshipped by riding an elephant. Garlands of taruā kadam (a kind of flower) and dhuti have brought from Bengal. What Arun Choudhuri is worshipping sitting on the tool of Barun. Leave aside the flowers of previous day. Tell to your elder brother how many flowers would you need? Pull your

45 P. Kalita: *Āyatīr Uruli*, pp.79-80
hand with black, red and white coloured flowers. The water of sea has been brought into perform the act of cants. The God is now worshipped with a leaf of sacred tulasī.

Time is going now. Women are requested to come out for bringing water. Because the groom is to take another ceremonial bath before he gets ready in the evening to start for the bride's house. When women will go to bring water they sing the following song.

Olāi āhā sasi prabhā rājār mādoi / 
subha ksane yātrā kari jal ānogoī //
olāi āhā doivāki yamunāloī yāo/
krṣnak nevaba jale dibā Ganga māo//
sojovā dunari ghat mangal kariyā/
logovā sahasra banti ghṛta toila dīā//
māthe duvāi tuli lovā dharam ṭekeli/
sandhyāte tulība lāge kiya ati beli//
sandhyate bulība pānī ati barasuva /
puvale pariba paksi jale yāba suva // 46

The queen sashiprabha is asked to start in the auspicious moment to bring the water. Mother Daibaki it is the time to start for yamuna. Mother Ganga shall donate water for

46 Anima Barman (ed): Saḥaj Biyā nam, pp. 11-12
Krṣṇa to take his ceremonial bath. So prepare **dunari, ghat** etc. and flame thousand of earthen lamps with ghee and oil, keep the religious pitcher by bowing your head. Water should draw in the evening. All the women folk of **Gakul** starts in a group to draw water from Ganga by making Uruli sound. The water should drawn in the evening otherwise the birds will impure the water in the morning.

The tradition of bringing water on the wedding day is prevalent in Bhojpur. This rite is called **Matakor** in Bhojpur. A batch of women will go to the near by river or pond and they will bring pure clay from the bank of river or pond by the process of diging. A pitcher (kalasa) carried by a woman will be put on that clay. After removing the water pot the clay will be mixed along with the other soil. Then out of this mixed clay the womenfolk will make a oven which is known as **bīhuti-chulhā**.

The **bīhuti-chulhā** is essential at the time of **langnā** of the marriage.

At that time the womenfolk sing teasing songs burden with slang words attacking the women who is busy with the diging. One such song is given below as a specimen:
The male cuckoo is in the forest and the she-cuckoo is flying towards the forest. They are making erotic play there.

In the Assamese context it is found that at the evening after the ceremonial bathing of the bride or the bridegroom the womenfolk along with mother of the bride or the bridegroom proceeds for performing the rite of the suwāg-tolā, i.e., welcoming of the fortune at the bank of the river or pond by singing songs. There the mother of the bride or bridegroom, makes two toys with clay, similar to male generative organ and female generative organ. Then after both the toys are made one toy by the mother. The songs sung in this context seem to be burden with slang words. As for example one of the such song is given below:

```
thorkā bagari bechāmach rām hari e-he /
dorār mākak domat bech rām hari e-he //
```

47 H. Tiwari & R. Sarma (ed.): Op-cit., p. 199
i.e., Oh! friends, the mother of the bride (or the bride-groom) does not know to perform the rite suwāg-tolā. As such she shall be sold to a fisherman. But fisher is also not willing to buy her. He says that he is not in a position to buy the woman because she does not know the process of cutting the fish.

Time is going fast. It is the time to set out to bride's house for marriage. In an auspicious moment the groom's party starts to marry to the bride's house riding on elephants, horses or dola (pālki). Vehicles are also used by the bride-groom party according to their social position and status. The women sings varieties songs at the time of departure. A specimen of such song is given below:

Informant: Late Yamuna Devī (51), Hazorikapara, at Darrang, at the Courteray of Prof. N. C. Sarma.
sājī pari kṛṣṇa chandra alāl sandhiyā belā /
saranga dhanukā āni daruke yogālā //
rath khān sajī mor ati sighre ān /
kundilaloī āji māi kariba prasthān //
sajālanta rathkhān parama utsuka /
krāpar āgat āni yogālā daruki //
subarnar mukut rathā āriche choupāche /
jīlī mīlī kare yen, hirāhe prakāse //

i.e., Lord Kṛṣṇa is getting ready to proceed Kundila and asks to decorate saranga bbw. Accordingly, the chariot is nicely decorated and placed the same before Kṛṣṇa. The golden pearls hung surrounding the chariot are glittering like diamonds.

The tradition of singing songs at the time of departure is prevalent in Bhojpur also. The bridegroom party is called barāt in Bhojpur. Like Assamese society the Bhojpuri barāt also uses elephant, horse, Pālki etc. More vehicles are also used according to the capacity of the bridegroom's house. The following song bears the similarity to that of Assamese song sung at the time of departure of a bridegroom.

49 S. Devi (ed): Op-cit., p. 31
Marriage songs are limited to the domain of womenfolk. All intricate customs of a wedding are known only to women. From the start of the nuptials till all ceremonies, young and old women get busy at every stage which finds a lyrical outlet

50 K.D. Upadhyaya: *op-cit.*, p. 179
in their orally composed songs. Simple in language and of easy imaginary they are replete with similes, alliteration and wit. A wedding centres round the bride and the groom, more particularly the bride and it is always sad when one thinks of her, for she is going away for good leaving home of her birth and all those who are so dear to her:

kelei kutiña kumalkai pachalā /
loke bāti bharāi khābo //
kelei tulilā rupahi āideuk /
loke bane karāi khāba //

Why cut the tender banana frunk to fine pices (for the curry), only others will eat bowlful of it, why bring up the beautiful girl, for others will enjoy the fruits of her labour.

Similarly the following Bhojpuri song reveals such a lamentation of sad:

chandra badan aichan beti ho, kabani dei bhaili devarā pe thār /
suraj āgat bhaili gahani beti gori badan kumhilāi //

51 J. Das: Folklore of Assam, p. 104
Here the poet talks about love of the father and the daughter during the time of farewell. The daughter with moon-like body used to stand at gate. As she got the sun raise she appeared fading. She told her father with respect to listen to the prayer. If she asks for erecting a tent or covering the house or if she wants the sun to disappear which has burnt her fair body. She asks him what the tent will be or with what the house will be covered. How he will cover the Sun which have effected her body. She fells him that she is just like a guest to stay for a day only in his thatched house. The next day she will be going out with her husband. The father says that she was given good milk to drink and curd from the cow.

The tradition of singing svayambar songs such as Sita-svayambar, Rukmini-svayambar, Usasvayambar, Parvatir

52 H. Tiwari: Ganga Ghatiki Geet, p. 95
svayambhr in connection of the marriage ceremony is found in both the areas. A specimen of such type of song is given below, which is current in Bhojpur.

vasaha charahala siva garajata a beli jhorini
a bele bhabhut he /
sarape anek siva anga par lotela, sekar gaurâ he
blyâh he //
dasâ sakhi anek dasa sakhi piche pare
dasa sakhi gahana lagal he /
pariche bahar bhaeli sâsu madagini, sarapa chorelâ phuphukar.
lahraba patkali âchai chalkali, hani deli
bajar keyar he //
aishan baurâha bar ke gauri ham na debi balu
gaurâ rahihe kuyar he /
iani ammâ roahu; iani ammâ choahu jini karu
eita bairâq //
puraba janamake likhala tapasi bar, se keise
metal jâî he /
malin tele katoraban abtana dihi siba dâhin bâh he //
bahiya moran gaurâ bat ek pucheli; kat din umri
tohâr he //
barimhâ janamal bis vishnu janamal, janamale tribhuban
nâth he /

i.e., Mahādev went to marry Pārbatī by wearing snakes in his neck and other ornaments in his body. The mother of Gaurī refused to give marry her daughter to Mahādev. Gaurī told her mother that it would be impossible to change her decision. Thus the marriage is over. Then Gaurī asked Śiva about his age. He said that he was born at the time of Brahma, Vishnu and He would be alive up to four Yugas.

In this context the following Assamese song can be cited which bear the similarity with that of Bhojpuri song.

**Sibaloī Gaurike sampradān kariche**
**Gotra chingi āji diyā**
**Jaṅtar re parā sarpe gunjarile**
**Parvati bulile khāil**
**Mahadev bulila nakhāi pārevati**
**taloike āche upali**
**bāghare chale pāri mahadev bahilā**
**Parvati sankha bajāl //**

Gaurī was married to Śiva; She surprised to see Mahadev along with His dress, snakes etc. But Mahadev said to Parvati that there was no cause of fear. Then after Parvati played Sankha sitting on the skin of tiger.

---

54 A.D. Barkataki : *Op.-cit.*, p. 75
In the Bhojpuri songs the mother of Gaurī being surprised at the presence of Mahādev. But in the Assamese song Gaurī Herself was surprised to see Mahādev.

*Kanyā-dān sanśkār* is the most important ritual of the wedding ceremony of Hindus. The significance of this rite is so much that after the completion of it, the bride breaking the cord of her own parents goes to her father-in-law's house and takes their family title. The system is similar to both the areas. At an appropriate hour the bride is brought out and the priest starts the Vedic rite and the bride's father gives her away. It is called *Kanyā-dān*. After *Kanyā-dān* the rite *saptapadi* is performed. In Bhojpur it is called *Bhamber-ghumānā*. Then the rite *sumanjali* is performed. In all these stages women folk sing various marriage songs. At the end, The bride-groom is taken inside home to perform a special ceremony. In this context the women sing different teasing songs humourously for the pleasure of the audience. This type of songs is known as *Kahābar* in Bhojpur. In the undevided district of Kamrup this genre of song is called *khijā-gīt*, and in upper Assam it is called *jorā-nām* and in the district of Darrang is called *nindā-pad*. 
The women of both the parties want to show their supermacy through the teasing songs and a competition is seen along them. In the Assamese khijā-git or jorā-nām the bride-groom and the bride are equally teased by the bride party and bridegroom party respectively. Even the priest is not spared. The proof of the above activity is found in the following song:

bar tp āhiche bhalake kariche
bamunto āhiche kiyā ?
bamuntal āhiche, hompurba najāne
gharalol pathiyāi diā // 54

i.e., The bridegroom has come. It is well. But why the priest has come? The priest has come, no problem, let him go back as he does not know the performance of Homa.

In the khijā-git's the situation sometimes takes ugly turn, when both the parties use bitter languages to tease each other. Then the situation is controlled by the middle man. But in the kahabar songs only the bride-groom and his party are teased and the situation is always remained peaceful. Following song of kahabar is given as a specimen:

54 Informant: Sunati Kalita (40), Chhaygaon,
Data collected on 20/12/96
Here is a fine joke whether newly wed wife tells her husband to come at mid-day and she will have a fight with him. At the bottom will be the quilt and above will be a heavy chador or blanket. In between the two will be fighting.

(M) Post-nuptial songs:

In Assam, the custom of child marriage is almost extinct. So the custom of sending the bride to the groom's house in the context of first marriage is prevalent in Assam. There is no traditional custom to bidai (farewell) of the bride-groom in the Assamese society. Simply the bride-groom bows down to the aged and public present. As soon as a gloomy sadness prevails in the house of the father of bride. The members of the family and the women present express their sadness through songs:

55 K.D. Upadhyaya: Op-cit., p. 179
Who has played with the feather of karsen bird at the floor, will accompany the groom Rama. O dear elder brother! You have very often joked at me for eating, but you see the bride will leave the house making it empty. O dearest! do not get disappointed also our hearts will be burning. Had you been a son you would have been kept.

In Bhojpuri society the bidai (farewel) is called Govanā. The word govanā derivres from the Sanskrit word gamana. In case of early marriage govanā is performed after the bride’s attainment of puberty. But now-a-day this system

96 Lila Gogoi: Asamîyâ Lok Sâhityar Rîprekha, pp.62-63
is not in vogue in this society. So this rite is performed just one day after the marriage or within a year. The songs associated with this context are called gavanā-ki-git. The moment is very sadest to farewell of a bride. On that very moment of Govanā the mother of a bride is expressing her grief and sorrow through the following song:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tihu ta calalu beti apana sahurabā } & \\
\text{se suna kailu e beti, hamro anqanabā } & \\
\text{akhen ke pulriyā, nagar ke of bhayalu } & \\
\text{godī ke beloāā bhayelu dumri ke phulawā } & \\
\text{toharo sakhiā sab, phiri phiri jāī he } & \\
\text{bhulīye nahi alhe abā, hamro anqanabā } & \\
\text{bhor bhīnāsār beti, sun lāgi gharawā } & \\
\text{ke abā bolīhe uthi, koyali ke boliā } & 57
\end{align*}
\]

O daughter, you are going to your father-in-law's house leaving my house. In your absence no friends or relatives will come. It will be very difficult to hear your cuckoo's like voice, my home will be charmless at your absence.

In the Assamese songs also the mother of the bride is lamenting for her daughter who will go along with her husband. Father, the mother sorrowfully says that it will be impossible to bear the pangs of separation, e.g.:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{dhekit dhān jurile a nājitorā} & / \\
\text{māraī bināiche a' nājitorā} & / \\
\text{kone barhāl chālī laba a' nājitorā} & / \\
\text{achinā gharalol jabolol olalā} & / \\
\text{maramar bhanītic skale arilā} & / \\
\text{salate bahāl 0' nājitorā} & / \\
\text{khuriye bināiche o' nājitorā} & / \\
\text{Ban rājar nagraat āji Usā-haran} & / 58
\end{align*}
\]

From the above discussion and comparison it can be said that like the Assamese, the Bhojpuri marriage is also a musical affair. Marriage songs current both in Assam and Bhojpur regions bear great significance from the folkloristic point of view. They can furnish instances of how folk imagination strings on the same thread, the animate and the inanimate the earthly and the external.

58 Informant: R. Kakati (35) Vill. Bihapur, Nalbari, Data collected on 10-11-96
Funeral Songs:

The last sacrament in the life of a Hindu is the funeral with which a man closes the concluding chapter of his worldly career.

The creation is regarded as an offering in to sacred fire, conducting the corpse to the heaven as a sacrificial gift. The rite of cremation is known dahan-kara among the Hindu society of Assam. The custom of singing songs is also prevalent in Assam.

In some places of Assam some selected verses from nam-ghosa are recited when a man is lying on a bed or when a person is counting his days. The following lines can be cited as example:

enehen baltarani noi /
mok niya par kar //
tir bir tir bir /
yen ------- //59

e.g.; It is request to god to make necessary arrangement to cross the Baltarani river.

59 Informant : Renuka Kakati (67), Kanara Satra,
Data collected on 8-11-96
After death the family members cry particularly the women weep and describe the goodness of the deceased person. But they can not fulfil the characteristics of a man. A woman whose husband has passed away is reciting the following stanza while she is crying. e.g.:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sunya ghar chai, thaki kenko ko e;}
\text{oh mor sahu ai soke pure toke moke //}
\text{nagare nagare bihaari ahilo e /}
\text{oh, mor sahu ai svamike lagal pám kot //}\n\end{align*}
\]

Oh, mother-in-law, how can I see the empty house? I am unable to bear the pangs of separation with my husband.

The above song can be termed as song of lamentation.

The tradition of singing of the funeral song is prevalent in Bhojpur also. These songs are divided into two categories-
(i) songs describing goodness of the dead person, and
(ii) songs describing sadness of death of the family. The following lines are mentioned below as a specimen of such type song, in which a woman is describing the goodness of her dead husband before the owner.

60 P. Goswami : Op.-cit., p.65
rajaväre rajawă
nagartyāke muri ke
kataiboho re rājā // 61

i.e., The wife of the barbar sings sorrowfully before the honour (owner of the house) who will cut his (owner) hair from that day onwards, as her husband is no more on earth.

61 Informant: Anita Pandey (55) Lakhimpur, Data collected on 12/3/97