CHAPTER VIII

CULTURAL CONTRIBUTION OF THE SATTRAYA

ART AND MUSIC

The sattra institution was not only a religious centre but it served the purpose of educational and cultural need of the people as well. In the field of literature, the contribution of sattras, particularly those belonging to the Jura Sañhati, during the last three centuries is of great importance. Therefore it is to be discussed under a separate chapter.

From the earliest times to the present age, the distinctive culture of the Assamese people can be divided into two groups— one folk, and the other based on a classical tradition which may be termed as 'sattrīyā'. The second is the outcome of the Vaiṣṇava movement, which is responsible for the education of the people in various ways. From the early period till the days of the British rule, the sattra was the only institution to impart general education. Almost all the sattras maintained some 'tol's of their own. Under the guidance of experts, people were taught the art of music
and dance like bhāonā, yātra etc. The sattras of the Puruṣa Samhāti kept closer contact with the laity than those belonging to other Samhatis. The satra institution thus contributed a great deal not only in social and religious matters, but also in the field of literature and art. Moreover, they maintained libraries with a number of manuscripts in their possession. 'The cultural history of Assam in respect of fine arts and crafts, of education and learning, since the beginning of the sixteenth century till the advent of the British, largely developed centering round the Vaisnava movement which in turn found expression through the satra institution'.

MANUSCRIPTION PREPARATION AND ILLUMINATION

The art of manuscript preparation and illustration has been discussed by Dr M. Neog in an independent chapter in his Saṅkaradeva and His Times (chapter X),

1 Aspects of the Heritage of Assam, Saṅhati, 1959, p. 55.
where references are made to Sir E.A. Gait\(^2\) and Dr S. K. Bhuyan\(^3\) in respect of preparation-process of manuscripts. The art of illumination has also been considered by the same author with particular reference to the technique of the \textit{Citra Bhāgavata}\(^4\) of the Bāli-sattra of the Narowā group. In Assam, Vaishnavism inspired its adherents to poetry, drama, music and, last but not least, painting. The paintings of the \textit{Citra Bhāgavata} seem to be the work of some sattra artist and a representative work too of the Assam school. The technique and finish of this work exhibit strong Rājput-Mughal influences, although here and there local elements are naturally to expected. ... In the manuscript \textit{Bhāgavata} there is some amount of convention and stylization, which counts for a limitation on the art. The figures are mostly in profile. The eyes are fish-shaped and have arched eye-brows. Physiology is not much heeded to and physiognomy scarcely shines bright; individualization is not the aim


\(^3\) Descriptive Catalogue of Assamese Manuscript, Introduction, p. XV.

\(^4\) see SIT., pp. 304-306.
attempted at by the painter's brush. ...Even in the MS Bhāgavata there is a rhythm in the scenes of musical performances of Gandharvas, Apsaras and Vidyādharas. Attempts at symmetry are evident. Movements of groups are effectively depicted. The head-dress of male (turban bound with sash) is known ordinarily as 'Moglāi ṭūpi' because of the fact that it is modelled on that of the Moghuls. Landscape or any other background is scarcely or never attempted; and perspective seems to be a thing till now unknown to the painter, as the third dimension is nowhere in evidence. Successive scenes have been flatly depicted on the same plane like those in celluloid ribbons of cinematograph but without anything to mark one from another. The peculiar way of representing pouring rain-water, rivers and lakes are of a conventional type. Mountains look like cross-sections of them. The trees are far from the real. The chariots (rathas) are not very happy in that they look like a low, flat stool with wheels at the bottom and a flag post at the front.

These are the most salient features of the Assamese
branch of medieval painting; and variations upon these are very rare. Several compositions of colours were employed; but the treatment is always flat.

Painting was practised in the numerous sattras and in the Ahom and Koe royal court circles, where the artists enjoyed royal patronage. In some of the bigger sattras the visitor's eye with pleasure catches the sight of mural paintings and wood-carvings of beauty, with folk-art elements, depicting figures of gods and scenes from the Vaisnava scriptures. It is considered an act of piety to copy scriptures on 'sāci-pāt' and, if the pious copyist had the knack, he would put in miniature paintings from page to page to illustrate the legend in each'. The above description gives a good idea of the main features of painting of the sattra school of Assam. It is, therefore, needless to go into the subject any more. Few points, which, however, not included in the above work, may be noted here.

Writing materials: Preparation of ink: The ink used in writing which is water-proof and does not fade away,

is prepared from 'silikā (Terminalia citrina), urine of the black bull and raw barks of Ām (mango tree). A few fruits and barks of other varieties of trees like Amarā (the hog tree) and Jāmu (Eugenia jambolana) etc., may also be added. All these are kept in an earthen bowl. A piece of iron is also to be put into the bowl containing these things. The pot is kept exposed to devr for at least a fortnight and a non-perous basin is kept below it. The ink (mahī) percolates through the earthen bowl and drops into the vase. Blood of kuciyā (a variety of fish) and soot may be added.

Pen: The pen (lekhani) was made of quill, bamboo tendrils or of reed. Sometimes pens are also made of 'dhekīyā-lati' (a species of creeping fern). The quill used is generally of the kite, gander or such other birds. The writing plate was made of a sheet of wood sometimes coloured with the extract of 'kal-čil' (the flower of the plantain tree). The pencil used was prepared from clayey soil rolled like a finger and dried or burat. This is called 'khadi-mātī' of which reference is made in connection
with Puruṣottama's learning the alphabet. Learning the alphabet is called 'Kalidaiya'. The brass for painting and illuminating work, called 'tuli', was made of the hair of cat, horse or a nap of cloth or jute. Sometimes a quill is used for this purpose.

Besides 'saci-ät' (bark of the Aquilaria Agallocha tree), tulā-ät (cotton leaf) and bhuj-ät (birch-bark), other materials like ivory, copper, iron, stone and silver etc., however, do not appear to have been used by the sattras during this period. The tāl-ät (palm leaves) which is widely used in Orissa for the same purpose is, of course, not found in use perhaps because of the availability of

6 Vidyānanda, vv. 20-23.
7 The writer had the opportunity of seeing the Madalai-pañjī preserved at the Jagannātha temple at Puri. MSS of Orissa are mostly made of 'tāla-patra'. The state museum at Bhubaneswar preserves a good number of MSS. See also the paper entitled 'Gurujaṇā O Atibar Gosāi' in Oriya, pub. in the Journal of the Regional College of Education, Bhubaneswar, vol. II, no. 1, 1964.
a more enduring variety like the sāci-pāt. Even the horoscopes were written on a long sāci-pāt, which were folded again into some folios so that it would come to a sufficient measure of length to keep at case.

As painting materials, hēṅgul (vermilion), hāṅtāl (yellow arsenic), gandhak (sulphur), nil (indigo) and dhal (chalk) were used.

The practice of illuminating the holy books have come down from the time of Śāṅkaradeva. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa, of the famous Bāli-sattrā, Nowgoaṅ, which has been reproduced in print under the title Citra Bhāgavata, has been able to draw the attention of scholars on India and abroad. The original copy now preserved at the same sattrā bears the date 1461 Saka/1596 A.D. As regards the

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8 The present owner of the MS is Uṣā Devī of the Bāli-sattrā. It is notable that the last folio of the original work being damaged, Dhanesvara Ātā, the late Sattrādhikār of the sattrā and owner of the MS, replaced it and put the original date thereon. This information was supplied by his son, Śivendradeva Goswami, the presently deceased Sattrādhikār of the Bāli-sattrā.
technique and the style of the work, scholars have already pronounced opinions. This is the only work of antiquity of this type, which has come to light from one of the principal sattras of the Puruṣa Samhāti. There does not seem to be any possibility of discovering such illuminated manuscripts of an earlier date. The Bāli-sattra had a library with a good number of manuscripts preserved therein. But its present condition is on the wane day by day. There were two other big libraries, one at the Korcoāg-sattra and the other at the Kujī-sattra, where works not only on religious but also on technical subjects like astrology, grammar etc., were preserved. The Kīrtana-ghar of Bardowā caught fire several times. So we cannot have any old record of importance preserved there. Moreover, from early days the Jarowā Gosāis mainly used to live at the Bāli-sattra and everything belonging to them was

9 For example, see K.K.: Laudique, foreword, p. i; M. Neog: 'The Vaiṣāsava Renaissance in Assam', p. 18; R. Majumdar: 'iaricaya', vol. XIII, part I, issue No. 3, 1953. Also noted above, vide p. 342-344.
kept there. This is the main reason why all the important relics and almost all other belongings, earlier possessed by the Narowā sattras, are found at the Bāli-sattra.

Another work of a beautiful calligraphy of the Bāli-sattra is the Nimi-navasiddha Samvāda of $\frac{2}{3}$ x $2\frac{1}{2}$ size with about sixty folios. The work is written on fine sāci-pat. It is written by a niddle-like pen and the script is so small that it requires a magnifying glass for people to read. Another work of illumination is Anādi-pātan of the Kujī-sattra, which is of comparatively recent date. The work was probably illuminated on the model of the above Dhāgavata, but

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10 (i) 'Bardowāt Saṅgīt Carecār Dhūrā', pub. in the P.G. Students' journal of the University of Gauhati, 1959. The same paper is now incorporated in Maṅcalekha by Atul Chandra Nazarika, 1967.

(ii) 'Narowā ritr-kular ūrisamāpti:paralokat Śivendra Goswāmī' by Gajen Deka, pub. in the 'Dainik Asam', Gauhati, May 21, 1967, on the first death anniversary of the late Satrādhiḥkār Śivendra Deva Goswami of the Bāli-sattra.
most of the figures are not in the profile as those of the Bhāgavata. It is also made of tula-pāṭ.

Besides illuminated manuscripts, we have other types of paintings as on 'sinhaśana', book-cases, walls and panels of the shrine and the like. In the beams of the wooden throne(sinhasana), the following are generally depicted : (1) figures of the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu(=dasāvatara), (2) padum-phul(padma), (3) birds like parrot, gander etc., (4) creeper, fish and sometimes adorned with the figure of an imaginary animal resembling a fish and having a trunk like that of an elephant, called 'magara'. The 'Karāṇi' or 'Gosāi-karāṇi', where necessary materials for daily worship of a devotee are kept, is also decorated in a like manner. On the front two panels of the altar placed over the throne( which is called āmari-ghar or āmahī-ghar), two mythical figures of 'Jaya' and 'Vijaya', standing with nace on their shoulders, are depicted. At the top of the 'āmahi-ghar' the 'kalaci'( an oblong pinnacle made of brass or copper) is fixed. A canopy
is hanged over the entire 'simhāsana'. The legs of a simhāsana are generally designed like a lion standing over an elephant; and sometimes, the elephant is placed over a tortoise. So also, figures of lion, elephant, tortoise etc., are made on wood as legs of a book-case. The wooden figures of elephant and lion of the throne and the figures of book-case (ṭhagā or ṭhagi) are painted and decorated. Various types of masks used in the bhāvonā performance and other instruments used there and puppets are painted accordingly. Other wooden figures like Gaṇuḍa, Maṇumāna etc., and gods and incarnations of Viṣṇu on their mounts are put for the decoration of the kīrtana-ghar. Two types of fans— one big and the other small— are decorated and painted either with 'heṅgul-hāsitāl (vermillion and yellow arsenic) or with some herbs like 'rāc-pāṭ', termaric etc.,¹¹ in an

¹¹Dvārikā, v.3093, gives the explanation of the name 'Heṅgulāyā Yadumāni', wherein it is said that he used to decorate his fan, knife etc., with 'heṅgul'. The verse is:

'heṅgulāyā kari lay kaṭārī bicaṭi,
ikāraṇe bole heṅgulāyā Yadumāni'//
indigenous way. Mats of various size are also decorated in the same manner.

Dance and Music: The work, Sāṅkaradeva and His Times, includes a chapter on Vaisnava music and dances besides some valuable papers on the subject by the same author. Scholars are of opinion that the sattriya style of classical Indian dancing has some features in common with the Manipuri style, which has now been recognised as one of the four school of dancing in India. The sattrā institution was a centre of wide culture of music. It gained a remarkable standard in its tone and variety in the early period of the Vaisnava movement. As a result of that, many people, including those of the hostile groups, were attracted to its fold. In the biographies of Sāṅkaradeva and Madhava-deva, references to such incidents are found abundantly.

Moreover, the paper entitled 'Dance Tradition in Assam', read at the Dance Seminar of the Sangeet-Natak Akademi, New Delhi, 1956, is worth mentioning.

Aspects of the Heritage of Assam, pp. 46-47.
Mention may be made of Nārāyaṇa Thākur and Dāmodara Vīpra, who were attracted to the faith by such songs and music. Along with other music, the art of dancing was also in practice in the sattrā and this tradition had come down to our period.

The style of dancing, which may be called the sattrīyā school, is mainly connected with the dramatic performance, called bhaona. It should be noted that no woman dancer or actress is admitted into this school, the female roles in dramatic performances being played by boys. To impart training in dance, young boys of the sattrā are selected. They are taken either to the Kīrtana-ghar or to a suitable place where the teacher asks them to undergo some physical training. Everybody will sit in the padmāsana position and in that way prostrate on the ground. This process is called kācha-bāndh diyā. The knees, the chest, the shoulder and the waist of the trainee must touch the ground in that position. The trainee is given instruction to dance in the ek-tāli bhaṅgi (dances of the ek-tāli tāla). Afterwards
he receives training on different gestures like 'khar-pāk', 'nān-calanā diya', 'bahi-ciral', 'ciral', 'āṭhuwa', 'thiya-āṭhuwa', 'hāyre', 'chatrāvalī', 'thiya-khar', 'khar-bāgar' etc. The process is called 'bhaṅgi-sīka'.

It was the custom in most of the sattras to rehearse Dargāt and other gītas in different tunes as well as to practise different dances along with the gīta, throughout the month of Bhādra. This was known as 'behār-gowā' or 'behār-nacuwa'. In the same manner, naṭuwā-nacuwa or 'naṭuwā-sīkowa' (to impart training to dancers) is held at any time in the sattrā campus. The performance of the gestures of hands are generally known as 'hāṭ-diya' or 'mān-diya'. When a person sitting in the Nāṃ-prasaṅga or a bayān in the 'ghoṣā-dhemāli' part of the bhāona, demonstrates the hastas (mudrās, as ċaṛāmay and wrongly called) in accordance with the verses sung, the act is called 'hāṭ-diya' or 'mān-diya'. The term 'mān-diya' is to be particularly noted. It must be accompanied by tāl (cymbal) or khol or by both. When a person either sitting or standing at a place demonstrates hands according to the
verses sung by the musical party or according to the music played, the act is called 'mān-diyā'. It may come up in the middle or at the end of a gīta. This is why sometimes we get words like 'jauti-mān', 'mān-ek-tāli', or 'rūpakar-mān' etc., (instead of jauti-tāl, ek-tāli, rūpaktāl etc.).

There is only one type of dance not related to the bhaona performance. This is used, as we have said before, on the 'Nām-samāra' function held at the end of the month of Bhādra. Twelve different postures are used in that particular dance where everybody in the congregation takes part. This group dance is demonstrated during the time of ghosas of the function sung in the standing position. The participants keep their cymbals on head and sing the refrain moving in an oblong circle. The principal singer who leads the party, stands in the midst of them. While moving in that way, the party is to demonstrate the following

14 see chapter VII.

There is only a duet dance of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā in the drama Rasā-jumurā ascribed to Mañavadeva. This is connected with the entrance of the above two characters to a 'belwār- paritāl('dekhā jagata guru Kānu āwata, saṅgo sundart Rādhē rānga nilāwata') gīta. There are two different 'bhaṅgi's called 'jun-dharā' played on that dance.

In the 'dhemāli'(Sanskrt= pūrvarāṅa) portion of the bhāona the bāyans (players of the khol instrument) also dance in as many as nine different ways. This is called 'mān-calona'. In the 'ghośā-dhemāli' portion, there are twelve different ways (like 'pāji-kaṭā', 'khol-kilowā', 'jaya-jaya', 'nakṣtra' etc.) of

15 The corresponding 'ghośās' for each of the above gestures are given in chapter VII of this book.
gestures of hands called 'hāt-diya', performed by the bāyan. The ektaḷi rhythm has six bhaṅgis, rūpak-tāl has one and the kharmān-tāl has three. The jauti-tāl has about ten bhaṅgis and the dharān-jauti has two 'jāmān's - one longer and the other shorter. The paritāl has as many as twentyone bhaṅgis, which are also termed as 'cutārār bhaṅgi'. The following categories of dance, common to almost all the sattras of the Samhati, are generally found.

(i) Sūtradhārar nāc or Sūtra-bhaṅgi

The Sūtradhāra is to perform his dance in the 'nāndī-gīta' which is always sung in the ektaḷi tāl, the rāga being Suhāi. This he does after chanting the 'nāndī sloka'. At the end of the gīta, he dances according to the instrument played by the gāyan-bāyan party. At the end of this music, the 'bhatimā' is to be sung by the Sūtradhāra where he acts accordingly through gestures of his hands.

(ii) Praveśar nāc or Gosāi praveśar bhaṅgi

The main character of the dramas of Saṅkaradeva
and Mādhavadeva is Kṛṣṇa. He is to demonstrate gestures of hands in the gītā which is always sung in rāga- Sindhurā, in the ek-tāli rhythm. As soon as the gītā is over, the character dances in the ek-tāli bhaṅgi composed particularly for that purpose. The main character of the drama enters the stage in that way and it is for this reason that the dance is so named.

(iii) Gopī nāc or Gopī pravesār nāc

The female characters enter the stage by dancing in a different way. The dance, almost similar to that of the pravesār nāc, includes only some two or more bhaṅgis used in case of female characters.

(iv) Nāndī bhaṅgi

In the drama Kamsavadha by Rāmacandra Ātā of Narowā,

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16 Only in Rāma-vijaya by Śaṅkaradeva, Rāma is the main character. The dramatists of later period followed the tradition of keeping always Rāma or Kṛṣṇa as the hero of their dramas.

17 Only in Keli-gopāla by Śaṅkaradeva, rāga 'nāt' is used as the first gītā of the drama. In most of the MSS, this is written as 'nāta rāgena gīyate' (to be sung in rāga- 'nāt').
this dance is performed by Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva before they enter into the precinct of Kaṁsa. This, as well as the following two types, however, are not found in the other three principal sattras of the Sāṁhitā.

(v)RAYĀṇI bhaṅgi

When Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa in the Kaṁsavadha drama come out from the 'raṅga-sāla'(stadium), this particular bhaṅgi is played and both the characters dance accordingly. It is performed before the nāndī bhaṅgi.

(vi) CĀLI nāc

The term is related to warlike preparation (raṇa-cāli) as it is performed prior to Kṛṣṇa's fight with Kaṁsa. In the Narowā group of sattras, we do not get any other Cāli-nāc that may have some connection with the word cāri or with the 'Cāti' dance of Maṅgāpur.

Another form of Cāli nāc is found in the drama Arjuna-bhaṅjana by Mādhavadeva, wherein it forms a part of the dance performed by the monkeys who were offered bowls of butter by Kṛṣṇa. They enter the stage with a

18 see SīT., pp. 295, 298.
peculiar dance called 'bāndarar-gheta'.

(vii) Bālakar nāc

The friends and associates of child Kṛṣṇa, in dramas like Bhojan-bhār, Cor-dhara etc., dance in a particular form in the parital, which is known as bālakar bhaṅgi or gopa-bālakar nāc. There are some local varieties in this form found even in the same group of sattras.

(viii) Nāyikār bhaṅgi

As the term indicates, this is a form of dance of the heroine. There are altogether fourteen different bhaṅgis used in this dance. The influence of Devadāsī dance is also a noticeable feature of this particular dance. This has been considered as the most difficult form of sattrīyā dance which requires a long

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19 This peculiar form of dance has become almost obsolete nowadays. The dance is prevalent only in the Bāli-sattra of the Narowā group. It is included in two dramas of recent times. The dramas are—(i) Narakāsura-vadha, where Urvāśī is required to dance and (ii) Amṛta-mathan, where Kṛṣṇa in the form of Mohini dances in the above bhaṅgi.
period of training for its successful performance.

(ix) Naradar bhangi

Sages like Nārada enter the stage by dancing in a particular way, and such a dance is termed as Nāradar bhangi, meaning the dance of Nārada. For other similar characters the same bhangi is played.

(x) Yuddhar nāc (fighting dance)

This form of dance may be divided into three types—(i) fight with clubs, (ii) fight with bows, and (iii) wrestling. So far these types of dances are concerned, each has a sufficient number of bhangis used in different sattras.

(xi) Gheta mara and Catta mara

Instruments are played on various occasions which are of lesser duration than the bhangis are. These are used to serve the purpose of some actions such as going away from the stage etc., where actors are required to perform such acts by dancing. Thus in the Arjuna-bhanjana, Yasoda pursues Kṛṣṇa on such a gait called 'Catta'.
Actors other than the principal one of a drama enter the stage in a refrain (dhurā or pad) maintaining its rhythm produced by the tāl and the khol.

(xii) Jāmānar nāc

Another form of dance, called jāmānar nāc, is used by the actors in the drama where gāyan-bāyan also follow the dancer in some postures. This is found particularly in connection with either a gīta of the 'Śrī-gāndhār' rāga or a gīta of the 'Dharaṇ-jauti' tāla or sometimes, in connection with the gīta of the rāga 'Kārumyā-kedār'.

The Ojā-pāli dance is also found in some sattras, but this is not related to the bhāona performance. Two other minor types of 'bājanā' or bhangi may be mentioned here which are used in bhāona. In the first type a messenger enters the stage or leaves the stage. This is called 'dūtar-bājanā' or 'dūtar-bhangi' (dance of the messenger). There are as many as ten different bājanās of the messenger used in different sattras. The second type is called 'bahuwar-bhangi' or 'bahuwar-bājanā'. We have reference to 'bahuwar' (Basuwa) even
in early days. Mention may be made of the drama Sandotsava by Gopalā Ātā where reference to bāhuwa is found in a gīta ('āvata Garva ārā ātī gāya āy, bāwu načanta dāgī ḫakā'). In the bhāonā performance the clown or the buffoon generally appears in between two scenes, and tries to make the audience laugh with his antics. The bāhuwa enters the stage in a peculiar dance. His very gait creates laughter to the audience. There may be many bājanās of the bāhuwa.

Music: The contribution made by the Īruṣa Samhati to the sattrīyā music is manifold. This art, in due course, has spread far and wide. We have already enumerated different ways and modes of chanting prayers introduced by this Samhati. A particular gīta can be sung in five different tunes according to different prasaṅgas of the day. In the 'tāl-kobowā' prasaṅga, a gīta has four tālas (rhythm) in a part. In the maṅjirā

20 chapter VII.
21 'Sattrīyā Anuṣṭhānat Surar Bhūmikā', a part of which was pub. in the P.G. Students' journal of the University of Gauhati, ed. by Imran Shah, 1960-1961.
prasānga, the tāla of the same gīta is changed (which becomes a bit swift), and the tune is also changed slightly. In the Yorā or khol-prasānga (morning) the same gīta is sung in a different tāla (like kharmān, ek-tāli etc., fixed for the morning), where the tune is also changed. Again in the morning 'Āi-sakalar prasānga', both the tune and the tāla are changed. Towards the last part of the gīta, it is sung swiftly.

The tune of the ghoṣās, as found in the prasāngas, changes to a great extent in the ghoṣā-dherāli part of the bhōombo and also when sung after the khol-prasānga on certain occasions.

The method of imparting training in different types of music may be divided as follows—(i) Nām-sīkā (to learn the method of prasānga; this may not include the use of the cymbal), (ii) Tāl sīkā (this means the above, using different kinds of cymbals), (iii) Rāg sīkā (or Gāyan sīkā)—for dramatic performances also), (iv) Nāc sīkā or Naṭūwa sīkā (to get training in dance), (v) Khol sīkā (to learn to play the
The first kind includes different types of nām, such as mañjirī-nām, prasaṅgīyā-nām, ghoṣā-kīrtan, dihā etc. It is very difficult to acquire mastery on the last three items noted above. Of the instruments used in the sattrā, the tāla and the khol play a dominant role. Each rāga has two parts—ghar and tolanī.

In the khol-prasānga, we have 'guru-gheṭā' (another longer 'guru-gheṭā' is played on the death anniversary of Saṅkaradeva only), 'rāg-tolani' (where the gayan starts singing the rāga) always before the actual gīta. In the morning and forenoon prasaṅgas, the 'jumurā-ṭhelā' is played. For afternoon and evening khol-prasaṅgas, there are two other 'ṭhelās' called 'pātaṇi-ṭhelā' and 'bar-ṭhelā' played instead of the 'jumurā-ṭhelā'. The afternoon and the evening khol-prasaṅgas become very attractive when a competition in certain complex tālas between the gayan and the bāyan is held. Besides usual prasaṅgas and other devotional functions where numerous tunes and tālas are to be met with, the
sattras introduced some other musical functions for both the sexes. Out of these, mention may be made of

22 The following ghošā which is sung on certain occasions at the end of the gīta (khol-prasaṅga), may be taken as an example where a combination of four complex tālas (cōri-juti) is made. The combination is of rūpaka, saru-viśama, bar-viśama and the dah-lārī tālas. The beats are shown at the top of the words.

'Rama Kṛṣṇa Rāma Hari Rāmacandra Rāma Rāma
Srīrāma deva Yadupati/

The corresponding 'bol' for the same is as follows:

chīn thei nāḍha diṅā khīta nāḍha diṅā khīta
dhe ei dheī dāṅ kāṛkār dīt nāḍha diṅā khīti dāṅ
dīdi khīta kāṛkār tākā tātā khīta

nāḍha diṅā khīti dāṅ

nāḍha dheī nāḍha dheī dheī dheī dīt dāṅ

dhadha gāḍha diṅā dhāṅ gāḍha gāḍha diṅā ḍhāṅ
ghīt tā tūn dā kāṛkār dīt chīn chhāt dheī 0 0 0.
diha-nām sung on various occasions, thōn-vāṇānār gīt, padaśīlā-vāṇānār gīt, pīṇḍādānaṉ gīt, lagūn-diyanī bīyāṅ gīt, guru-ādārā gīt etc. We have altogether sixteen tālas used in the khel-prasāṅga. They are—(1) kārita, (2) kāttī, (3) jauti, (4) ṇūpak-tāl, (5) kharman, (6) ṇū-jaṅti, (7) dharaṅ-jaṅti, (8) āṭh-jaṅti, (9) ṇūga-gānjal, (10) sūṭār-gānjal, (11) sar-viṣama, (12) āṭh-tāl, (13) dāh-bārī, (14) sar-u-viṣama, (15) domāṇī and (16) rāsak-tāl. There are some other minor tālas like 'cāb-tāl', 'ṭhāk-tāl' etc. Another noticeable feature is that the Gosāis of the later period have used some six new rāgas in their dramatic works not used by Sankaradeva and Nādhabaldeva. Of these six, the rāga Meghamallār is reported to have no gītā. The other five are:

1. Cāga Jayaśrī (Jauti-tāl): First used by Lakṣṇādeva in the drama Ṛavaṇa-vadha. The first line is: 'calali Lakṣṇāṇa vīra hāte dhanu bhari'.
2. Raga- Goleangi (un-jauti): First used by Ramakhanta Ata in his drama Syamanta-hara. The first line of the gīta is: 'hāte naṣi layiā viṣra cale daire daire'.

3. Raga- Enat-kalyāni (Iman-kalyāni) (Jaritāl): First used by Laksmīdeva in Rāvana-vadha. The first line is: 'dhōwe Rāmacandra deva rathe cadi'.

4. Raga- Ramagiri (Visama-tāl): The gīta was first used in the drama Syamanta-hara by Ramakhanta Ata. The gīta begins with: 'nādekhiyā irasenaka pūche Sattrajita re Hari Hari'.

5. Raga- Bhairavī (Juati-tāl): First used in the drama Narakāsura-vadha. The first line is: 'Vāsava he, sunaha dukha dāruṇa'.

Bhāona: A good number of dramas written on the model of old ankhīyā-drama, has come down to us and most of these dramas are written by the Gosāis of the Purusa Samhati. It was a custom for the Adhikārs to compose a new drama to be performed at his investiture ceremony. Due to this tradition, a good number of dramas was composed by the heads of each of the sattras at different
periods. The dramatic performance became an effective means to draw the people to the faith. It is narrated in different biographies that the pontiffs of various sattras were able to receive royal patronage through bhūmā performances. Mention may be made of Rāmacandra Ātā of the Jarower sattra, who was highly appreciated for his skill and was offered rich gifts by king Śivasarṅ. Similarly, we are informed that on the occasion of the first death anniversary of Caturbhujā grāmar, the drama Rukmiṇī-haraṇ was performed. We shall dwell upon only some salient features of bhūmā, which have not yet been discussed elsewhere.

The bhūmā performance can broadly be divided into two groups—(i) din-bhūmā and (ii) rāti-bhūmā. Dramas written by Rādhavadeva, except the Arjuna-bhaṅjana, are generally called 'din-bhūmā' because these performances are held during day time. In such dramas, the two 'dhe-

māli', viz., 'bar-dhe-
māli' and 'ghoṣā-dhe-
māli' are not

25 Harinārāyaṇa, vv. 557-559; also HKKI., pp. 122, 238.
used; only three other dhemālis (na-dhemāli, cor-dhemāli, and rām-dhemāli) are played. There are also nine 'coka' performed in the preliminary (pūrvarānga) section of bhāona. The bar-dhemāli consists of seven such cokas. Besides 'calanā' (rhythmic steps), we have nine 'nān' used by bāyanas wherein they use to dance. The 'calanā' goes up to the 'khandi' part of na-dhemāli and then the following nine nāns are demonstrated. They are: (i) cālakīṭā cītiḍā, (ii) dūpakīṭā cītiḍā, (iii) saru-juti, (iv) bar-juti, (v) ād-juti, (vi) tini-juti, (vii) pāk-juti, (viii) saru-cala, and (ix) bar-cala.

In the 'rāg-sūcar' part, all the rāgas used in the drama are to be sung. At the end of the preliminary work, the Sūtradhāra comes to the stage and then the drama begins. At the end of his dance and before the 'bhāṣṭāmā', the Sūtradhāra starts chanting in the following way:

'nīraśtārā hari bol'

The khol follows this in the way:

khit dhit dhit dhit dhit dhit 0 0
dhei 0 0 dhei 0 0 dhei 0.
The Sūtrakāra then says:

'jayā māna bol'

Then the khol is played in the same way.

Again the Sūtrakāra says:

'jayā hari bol'

The khol is played accordingly in the same manner. Then only the Sūtrakāra utters like 'āndyante Sūtrakāra' or 'śloka' etc. It is remarkable that at the end of each verse of the bhaṭimā, the tāl-khol music is played like 'thei tāk dhindāō dāō khiti tāk dhei', and the Sūtrakāra jumps accordingly in a dancing position. The meaning of the bhaṭimā is explained to the audience through his gestures of hands. As soon as he leaves the stage, the actual drama begins with the entrance of the principal character.

For the purpose of light, 'bar-cāki', 'āriyā' and 'cautarā' are kindled besides the 'agan-gāḍa'. In the 'agan-gāḍa', made of curved plank in a semi-circular way, nine lights are placed, the interpretation of which has been referred to the nine kinds of bhakti. The 'cautarā' is a kind of lamp having no cover. Lights are kindled on
four sides of it with the help of mustard or castor oil. The 'āriyā' is a link or torch where rays are fastened to a bamboo stick and deeped in oil. This is to be carried by hand. Such a person is called 'āriyā-dhara' (person who holds the 'āriyā').

Another feature is that to the north of the 'lāi-khumā', a light screen (ār-kāpor) is placed in the Kīrtana-ghar from where the ladies of the Gosāī community can witness the performance. Here, a carpet, jugs with water and pillows etc., are kept as is arranged for the Adhikār. For discussions not included here, it may be referred to the work Šankaradeva and His Times, particularly the chapter 'Šankaradeva's dramatic art and technique'. As regards literary aspects of bhāonā, reference may be made to the next chapter.

As the bhāonā performance became very popular, it gave birth to a class of artist who prepared costume, decorations and other accessories required for bhāonā.

performance. Various types of masks are made for different characters. For instance, the person playing the role of द्वारकांड is to wear a four-headed mask; the mask representing रावण should contain ten heads etc. Masks are made either of wood or of bamboo. In the latter variety, rags are pasted over which an earthen layer is given. Then the mask is painted accordingly with 'हेडगुल', 'हाइतल' etc. Other accessories and model works like clubs, axes, shields, chariots, thrones are also made. Preparation of artificial hair and a long coarse role-like garment called 'जालां' made of jute is also noteworthy. The second type is used by persons playing the role of monkey, like कानूमना. The process of colouring artificial hair and jālam deserves attention. शिलखा (Terminalia Citrina), cow-dung, ashes of fried rice, extract of plants like 'केह-राज' and raw barks of the mango tree, जामु ( Eugenia Jambolana), and मधुरी-अम (Guava tree) are placed

in a vessel and the article to be coloured is also put in it. All these are boiled for few hours. Then the hair or the role (jalan) is put in mud. Sometimes indigo may also be added to it. After washing with plain water, it is to be kept in the shade. Thus artificial hair and jalan are made black. Fire works are also done where necessary in the performance. The Gosāis were since early days, expert in that line also. 28 The models of elephant, horse and cow etc., are made for the purpose of dramatic performances. Facial make up of different characters in different ways and preparing various types of ornaments used by them, have also their special features.

Other minor arts and crafts: Besides the crafts connected with bhāona, mention may be made of few other types developed in the sattra atmosphere. Of these, wooden carvings like lion over the elephant in one piece of wood as found in the 'siṁhāsana', deserve special mention. Such a siṁhāsana generally has three

28 N. I., p. 16.
to seven tires. Wooden figures with folded hands, finely painted and decorated, like Garuḍa, Hanumāṇa etc., are found in the Kīrtana-ghar of sattras. Wooden lamp-stand (gachā) and 'ṭhagā' or 'ṭhagi' (a book-case) with various designs in models of tortoise, lion etc., on the lower part, are specially used in the Kīrtana-ghar. The four legs of a stool and of the 'karaṇī' (where materials for daily worship are kept), are made of finely carved wood. But sometimes the legs of a stool is made of stone also. The class of people engaged in such works is known as 'khanikār'. Most of them are people belonging to the Gosāi community.

29 Four such stone legs, reported to have been presented by king Naranārāyana to Saṅkaradeva, are preserved at the Lāli-sattra.

30 Late Vaṁśīdhar Mahanta of the Aīśkeṭi-sattra near Cārdowā was an expert on the line. At present, Kesā-Kāṇta Mahanta of the Carūkhola-sattra (Mādaingīyā, How-gong), Viṣṇudeva Mahanta of the Cāṁguri-sattra, Kali-yābara, (Nowgoāy) and Dhaval Deva Goswami of the Lāli-sattra are experts who can do all these works like wood carving, mask-making and painting etc. But more or less, almost all the Gosāis know something of the above works.
The puppets made either of rags or of bamboos are another variety to deserve appreciation. It has become almost obsolete nowadays and only few persons are reported to have the necessary skill of making puppets and making them dance. The puppets representing different characters of a drama are made and painted accordingly. The craft of making artistic mats and fans (the bigger type of fan is fixed on the beam of the Kirtana-ghar and people use to pull it with the help of a rope in a to-and-fro motion) with finely split canes and the decoration thereon is also worth mentioning. Among other wood works, making of beads of the rosary with the help of a special type of lathe (where a single person performs the act with both the hands) is also to be noted. The bayans themselves make and prepare the khol instrument in the

31 Śrī Jīvakṛṣṇa Mahanta of the Kowānara-sattrā and Dhaval Deva Goswami of the Lēli-sattrā are the only two persons of the two main sattras who can exhibit such puppet-dance.
sattra campus. They even apply the paste (ghūna-diya) required for producing sound.\textsuperscript{32} The 'simhāsana' or 'thājanā' is decorated with 'gosāi-kāpor' and on that flower models, called 'gosāi-phul' made either of gold or of silver, are placed. Women also play their own roles by weaving 'gosāi-kāpor' (a piece of finely woven cloth placed at the altar) with various designs, flowers and creepers. It takes sufficient time to weave figures on such a piece of cloth. Sometimes the weavers' feet begin to swell as she has to sit tight at her loom for hours together. In this way, a piece of cloth may take even more than three months to complete. Sometimes some verses from the Kirtana-ghosa or from the Nam-ghosa are woven into the cloth or even a filigree work (like silver or golden thread), (called guṇā-sūtā) is done in such weavings.

\textsuperscript{32} Reference to the process is found in the KGC., p.46.