CHAPTER VII

FOLK STYLE IN PRODUCTION

Dramatic art is a broad art. It is the meeting place of life and art where so many artists, technicians etc. work together for a certain tals. As a composite art, dramatic art synthesises all type of artistic ideas. The message of drama or its artistic beauty may be expressed if it can properly harmonizes its essential parts. Music, dance, acting, lighting or light projection, customs (setting), make-up — these are fundamental internal organs of Dramatic production. Hence, production of drama comprises the proper utilization of all these elements. It is the result of the total output in the entire efforts.

In the present context of contemporary Indian theatre two models of drama is prevailing. On the one hand there is a western model while on the other hand there is a folk and traditional theatrical form. The first model endeavours to adopt the techniques of European theatre. The second model assimilates in its production of various elements of Indian folk theatre like music and dancing. From various different theatrical sources and traditions whatever elements, they thought were entertaining, were collected and presented in colourful manner to attract the masses.¹

¹ Varad Pande, M.L.: Invitation to Indian Theatre, p. 70
period Indian theatre provides an interesting synthesis of different influence working sometimes in a creative and sometimes in a crude and clumsy manner. After independence, some Indian serious workers of theatre have devoted their attention on traditional Indian folk-theatre. As a result, a new form of local tradition based theatrical movement began in the panorama of Indian theatre. In 1955 a verse-play in Hindi called *Andhayug* was published. Here the playwright Dharam Vir Bharti used the epic style of narration. After independence, particularly after 1960 the Indian theatre has taken a new turn. In the year 1939 the National School of Drama was established in Delhi. A sensitive director-actor E. Alkazi through his theatre laboratory, the National School of Drama has inspired so many students of theatre lovers to search for a real and meaningful theatre truly Indian in its character. The horizons of Indian theatre started expanding in different directions. The attention of the theatre workers turned towards rich variety of indigenous traditional theatrical forms flourishing in different regions. The attitude started shaping the production techniques of the post-independence Indian theatre. Brechtian theatre was introduced to India in a big way. Brechtian techniques of play production is very close to the production techniques of Indian folk-theatre. The workers of theatre realised the relevant of Indian traditional folk-theatre. As a result, the narrative technique of

2. Ibid, p. 73
3. Ibid, p. 74
4. Ibid, p. 74
the folk-theatre — Sutradhār and his Chorus — return meaningfully, so also dance and music.\footnote{Ibid, p. 74}

One of the important play \textit{Ashād Kā Ek Din}, by Mohan Rakesh written in 1958 but produced earlier than \textit{Andha Yug} created a deep sensation in the history of Indian theatre. Rakesh's plays like \textit{Ashāda Kā Ek Din}, \textit{Lahar On Ke Rājhanṣa} and \textit{Adhe Adhure} are the creations of a sensitive mind. \textit{Andha Yug} by Dharam Vir Bharati was produced by Pandit Satyadeva Dube in 1960 at Bombay five years after the publication of the play.\footnote{Rangachārya, Ādhya : \textit{The Indian Theatre}, p. 153}

E. Alkazi produced the play in an open air theatre in the magnificent ruins of Ferozeshah Kotla in Delhi.\footnote{Varade Pānde, M.L. : \textit{Invitation to Indian Theatre}, p. 75} The play was translated in many Indian languages and produced by many imaginative directors. At Manipur Ratan Thiyam produced in Manipuri style in which the material art of the region were employed meaningfully.\footnote{Ibid.}

In Bengal, Shombhu Mitra produced the plays of Rabindra Nath Tagore. The plays of Tagore were purely based on Indian heritage. Tagore conceived the elements of his drama from jatra of Bengal. Mitra through his Bahuroopi group tried to increase the attraction of the audience specially to this point. As a sensitive director Mitra emphasised on this aspect of Tagore's plays. Although modern story was present in the plays of Tagore,

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textit{Ashād Kā Ek Din}, by Mohan Rakesh
  \item \textit{Andha Yug}
  \item E. Alkazi
  \item Shombhu Mitra
  \item Rabindra Nath Tagore
  \item jatra of Bengal
  \item Mitra
  \item Bahuroopi group
  \item modern story
\end{itemize}
so he presented this not through the European style, but through the Indian style. In Kerala, K.N. Panikar tried to adopt the folk-elements in his production. He conceived this idea from local Kutiyattam theatre of Kerala. He convinced that we must take the elements from classical Sanskrit drama and local folk-drama for a better theatrical movement of India.

Sanskrit plays were translated in many Indian languages and enacted using the folk techniques. Some directors turned back to Bharata and his Nātya Sāstra as a basis of their dramatic productions of the classical Sanskrit plays. In this regard the play of 'Abhigyān Sankuntalam' directed by Bijoya Mehta which has telecast is remarkable to the history of present Indian drama. Another important figures like Adur Gopal Krishnan, Jit Aurobindan must be mention who were used Kutiyattam as a style of presentation in their dramatic production. 'Suno Janamejay' by Adya Rangacharya a Kannada play was published in 1960 and was translated in many Indian languages. In 1965, when the Hindi Version (Kelu Janamejay) was produced by the students of the National School of Drama, that it attracted the notice of critics both by its technique and its context. The playwright introduced the character of Sutradhāra as a story telling method. The Sutradhāra of Suno Janamejay is all the time on the stage, from the time the play opens until it ends.

9. Rangachārya, Adya: The Indian Theatre, p. 155
10. The Sutradhāra is a traditional character who opens a play in classical Sanskrit drama, once the prologue is over, he is no more seen on the stage.
Girish Karnad’s *Hayavadana* (1970) based on the Indian legend Betal pancabincati is a very powerful play. The drama was staged in a folk style (Yakshagana) by B.V. Karanth and Vijaya Mehta in its Marathi version. Vijay Tendulkar is a very significant dramatist, the production of his *Ghashiram Kotwal* under the direction of Jabbar Patel was a landmark in the contemporary theatre. Patel used various Marathi folk theatre forms while staging this play in an effective manner. *Bhābāni Bhāwāi*, a prominent play directed by Ketan Mehta is another important play of this period. The director used various Gujarati folk elements in a meaningful way. In Karnataka Chandra Shekhar Kanbar in his plays like *Jo Kumāraswamy*, Sangya Bālya used folk-form. These efforts to use folk theatrical forms by contemporary writers and directors has given rise to a powerful trend. Habib Tanvir gives a new dimension to the folk-theatrical forms of contemporary India. Tanvir staged a folk-version of the Sudraka’s Sanskrit play *Mriccakattika* under the title *Mitti Ki Gādi*. He used the folk and tribal theatrical forms of Madhya Pradesh in his productions. His magnum opus production is *Charandās Chor*. This play hits all over India. It is a very powerful folk-play. He staged this play by the use of folkforms of Satrishgari area in Madhya Pradesh through his Nayā theatre group. In the correct sense the trend of using folk-theatre forms was well established by Tanvir through his play *Charandās Chor*. Tanvir actually created a repertory of folk and tribal actors. In this way India penetrates into a new theatre movements.
Like other parts of India, Assamese theatre has also entered into the field of experiments from the late sixties in one hand on the other we may observed the folk as well as tradition based production technique in the modern Assamese social drama since its beginning.

Ram Navami:

We have already discussed that the first Assamese social drama Ram Navami of Gunabhiram Barua is primarily western in technique. We have also noticed that at the same time this drama is not free from the impact of classical Sanskrit drama and old Assamese dramatic tradition. Although the playwright has not used folk style as a technique of presentation, in the last scene he used narrative method by the introduction of Pujari. The play ends with a pad which is composed in the idea of Vaishnava pad (verse). e.g.

sunibāhā savāsad jan, rāmnāvamr bibaran
ehānka asaiyā namānibā radācit.

(Respected audience, please listen the story of Ram Navami. You do not accept it as untrue).

The introduction of Pujari is a new form of Sutradhār (narrator). This shows that folk and tradition based technique was to some extent used in the production of the first modern Assamese social drama. However, that was perhaps not an experiment in the part of the dramatist but an impact of tradition.

11. Chapter VI
Kārengar Ligiri and Labhita:

padmanāth Gohāin Baruā and Lakshmināth Bezbaruā were the two great luminaries in the history of modern Assamese literature. These two literary giants have immense contribution in the field of art and culture of Assam. We have been observed that in our earlier discussion that there are various folk-elements in dramatis personae of the plays of Gohāin Baruā and Bezbaruā. But it is true that they did not used folk-style as a method for production in their plays.

Jyotiprasād Āgarwalā also did not use folk-style as a technique of presentation. However, a large number of folk-elements is perceptible in the plays of Jyotiprasād. Jyotiprasād has successfully applied folk elements in a refined and modified way. Jyotiprasād has also changed the traditional outlook of art and culture. He realised the significance and importance of the five thousand years old rich heritage of our culture.

His Sonit Konwari (1924) which is not cover our survey), a mythological drama is a very significant page in the history of Assamese songs and music. The playwright himself mentioned this in the introduction of Sonit Konwari.¹² The songs which are used in Sonit Konwari are the good analogy of the immemorable folk

songs of Assam, i.e., bīā-git, Bihu-nām, āi-nām, Dehabicārar git, tokāri git, Bangit, etc. The songs of Sonit Kowari were sung by the tune of these noted folk-songs. He displays Padum Kali Nach, Bihu dance and Bhāvanā style dance in the songs of Sonit Konwari. e.g.,

(1) (Kone) gache gache pātīdile phulare
    jaḍi (rām rām)
    bāliyā bhomorā gungāri āhe
    gondhale dhyaśi (rām rām)\(^{13}\)

(2) Padumkhani Suani Karile
    Kumaliā eti kaliyi
    bhāv tār āche
    bukute lukāi ! .......\(^{14}\)

\[\text{(Who) makes flower's home on the tree}
\text{Bees come for taking smell)}
\]

\[\text{Only all soften bud enhance the beauty of the whole tree of lotus. Emotion is hidden in the bosom !} \]

Agarwala's Kārengar Ligiri is his master piece and a magnum opus of Assamese drama. Kārengar Ligiri is the product of the synthesis of West and East — technicals devices. In the structure of the play we find indigenous folk elements. In the

\(^{13}\) Ibid, Act- I, p. 9
\(^{14}\) Ibid.
Scene- I of the Act- I the dramatist gives direction regarding the customs and designs to use the following tools:

'rajkarengar sowanikotha', 'son khotowa calpira', 'Rupar dapon', 'sonar sarai', 'Kaldilar barjapi', 'Salitar banti', 'barpira', 'Garar duwari', 'Rupar phuli', 'kata bastur barnana', 'Garakhiya kapor', 'Murari parg'.

In the third scene of the Act- I dramatical direction is given in this way:

The playwright uses 'a Nagai Gang' in the Scene- I of the Act- IV. The above noted tools and instruments are the part and parcel of our traditional cultural life.

15. Ibid, Karengar Ligiri, Act- I, Scene- I, p. 63
16. Ibid, pp. 70-71
Similarly, the dramatist uses the tune of folk songs in its musical perspectives. Sometimes he uses folk songs with slight modification to express the thoughts of characters and situation.

Nām

(1) Sonare pālen gat a' manetarā

Sonare pālem gat a' manetarā.

dhunia konwarar ghumatā nāhile

kapāhare talicā parā -

manetarā

Sonare .......... 17

Oh My star of mind you are in the gild-bed!

Oh My star of mind you are on the gild-bed!
The beautiful prince it not sleep

Oh My star of mind the bed is prepared by neptune

Oh my star of mind ..... 7

(2) banarīā āmi banar carāi

bane bane phuro anāī banāī ....
anāī banāī āmi

anāī banāī āmi

anāī banāī a' anāī banāī.

u-u-u-u --- u-u, u-u-u.

Vayāmar mainā tai pohaniyā pakhi

banariyā maināre pātalhi sakhi

17. Ibid, Act-I, Scene-I, p. 68
Jungly, we are the birds of jungle
we travel from jungle to jungle without purpose
we are without purpose
without purpose, Oh! without purpose.
u-u-u-u-u ... u-u, u-u-u.
You are the domestic bird of plain
You made the friendship with the birds of jungle
we talk at jungle of the homely matter
we talk at home of the matter of jungle
we will climb on the top of the hill
we are without purpose
without purpose. 7

(3) Jāuti jugiā dhane mor a'
prānate dīlā mok maram kumalīā
manat sawarani suvadiā
bukut bhāle powā a' prānār dhane
Jāuti jugiā dhane mor a'
smritir cabikhani pranaya phutukiā
kalpanā purāi dīlā mok a'
Jāuti jugiā dhane mor a'.10

19. Ibid, act- V, Scene- I, p. 105
(Oh my sweetheart you are eternal.
You have given affection in my heart
This fond memory is obvious in my mind
My heart is full of love, Oh my sweet heart!
Oh my sweet heart you are eternal
The picture of memory of love is meaningless
You have fill up in the pot of my imagination
Oh my sweetheart you are eternal.)

Such kind of application of folk-songs in the play earns a new dimension. Āgarawāla's another significant play is Labhītā (1948). Labhītā is a powerful socio-political play. The play has written against the background of War and Freedom Movement of India. The play is not a well made play. The playwright himself says in the introduction that Labhītā is not a traditional drama. Here is no plot and characterisation. However, the theme of the play is realistic. The dramatist uses folk-songs to express the ideas and feelings of characters and situation, e.g.

Ban-Git

(1) Luitedi jāw kore nāwariā
tai kore nāwariā oi
mānuhe mānuhar mārā m nubuje
tejimalāhe mai
.................

21. Ibid, Labhītā, Introduction, p. 188
(You are going over the Brahmaputra
Wherever you come from, Oh boat man,
Wherever you come from, Oh boat man,
Men do not understand the love of other man,
It is poor Tejimala I am ............)

(2) mor bārīt phulile Indrajit mālati
    tor bārīt parile chā,
tore mān-r katha utuwāi anile
    sandhi√ar bāuli bā.
    .................22

(Indrajit, mālati blooms in my garden
The shadow falls on your garden
The idea in your mind carries
by the wind of evening ........)

(3) ō amār gāong

ō amār gāong
amār gāongr mān rākhi
    maribalo√ jāo āmi
    maribalo√ jāo.

varpur tāmolere
seuijyā pathārere
durate jiliki thakā
    ʔamār gāong!
    .................23

22. Ibid
23. Ibid, act- IV, Scene- I, p. 214
(This is our village
This is our village
We can die to save the prestige
of our village.
Our village is full of trees of betel-nut and
green field which increases
the beauty from the far—
This is our village ...........)
Nātya Prabhākar Satya Prasad Baruā is a leading dramatist of our state. As a serious playwright, Baruā writes the psychological and intellectual problems of human life. Jyoti Prasad Agarawālā gives a signal of experiment in his plays to the post generation, it is Satya Prasad Baruā who really emphasis on that spirit of experimentation to further development. Like Jyoti Prasad Agarawālā, Satya Prasad also tries to synthesis between Western and Eastern concept and he also keeps in mind that the process of synthesis can never create a gulf between Assam and Indian tradition. Satya Baruā has been writing and producing plays for several decades and in fact he has acquired a respectable position as a playwright dealing with ideas and experiment in the form of his plays. He writes more than twenty plays and also adapted about ten plays.

Among these plays in Jabalā and Krināl Māhi he uses folk style in a very refined and modified form. In his Jabalā, the dramatic character Rupalāl itself transforms into an announcer (Ghosak). Such uses of narrative method in the presentation of his play helps to the audience for better understanding of the main spirit of the play. At the beginning of the play Rupalāl like Sutradhār (narrator) of Ankiyā Nāt started to tell the

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26. Jabalā, Act-1, p. 3
story. Gradually the dramatis personae comes on the stage (Manjulī, Satyen, Sanjib, Atanu, Arundhati, Champā, Prasānta, Kundan, Namesh) and the whole dramatic events has happens. He raises the root of the story after that he departs from the stage. Of course, in some crucial moment he again comes on the stage to establish the relationship of dramatic events. Such type of style of communication being a dramatic character as well as the announcer from the stage to the audience. We find in the folk-theatre also. Here the playwright uses this style very successfully from the beginning to the ending. Similarly, in the music and dance side the playwright uses the kathākali folk-dance.

**Mrināl Māhi**:

*Mrināl Māhi* of Satya prasād Baruā is a psychological problematic modern play. According to S.N. Sarma, the play may claims novelty from its theme. Baruā in his *Mrināl Māhi* also applies folk-style in a refined form. The drama begins in the following style --

Dipak: **mai aji aponālokak mrināl māhir kathā kam. mrināl māhir kathā jee mrināl māhiye ātmahaittyā kara buli aji keidin mānar para āgate bātri kākatat dāngar dāngar ākharar sironamāre box kari prakāsh kara haicil aponaloke nichya jānība khujiche mai kon? mai dipak**
dip.**

27. Sarma, S.N.: *Asamiya Nātya Sāhitya*, p. 344
28. *Mrināl Māhi*, p. 2
Dipak: Today I will speak about Mrinal Mahi. About Mrinal Mahi! Before some days it has published in the News paper that Mrinal Mahi has committed suicide. Certainly you want to know me, who is me? I am Dipak ——Dip.

Here Dipak performs the function of Sutradhāra. At the beginning he said that the central character of the play Mrinal Mahi committed suicide. He asked himself why Mrinal Mahi committed suicide? Yes, why? Through Flash Back technique the dramatist then starts the theme of the play. Bhabesh Baruā is the husband of Mrinal Mahi. After fifteen years of their conjugal life they have no children. Bhabesh Baruā is a morally degraded contractor. He is concern only with money and wine. Being a childless woman Mrinal Baruā is unhappy and she also annoyed with the behaviour of her husband. However, she takes care to her husband according to her capacity. Dipak a student who resides at her home and Keshab Hazarikā an Engineer are — the two different characters who can remove her mental agony. In other words, in connection of these two persons Mrinal Baruā becomes happy. It appears that Mrinal Baruā becomes pregnant. Bhabesh Baruā suspects this because he knows well that he has not capacity to produce a child. At last he kills her wife.

This is the theme of the play. The dramatist uses narrative story telling method and here we find the character transforms

29. Ibid.
into announcer. One of the important character Dipak frequently transforms into announcer and he establishes the link with audience. The method of presentation is properly dissolve with its theme. From the beginning to the ending this style is running and such a style maintains to keep the suspense of the theme.

**Bāgh (1971)**:

*Bāgh* of Himendra Barthakur is a successful play. The playwright here depicts social corruption, bankruptcy and moral degradation of contemporary society. He highlights the characters who connected with unsocial works through symbols. But the symbols are not very difficult to understand. In the form of the presentation in which the dramatist use is obviously traditional Aristotolian technique. Of course, his direction about customs of the play is quite indigenous. In the second scene of the play the playwright gives direction — the audience will see a blank place (*āgcotāl*) of a village house when the screens remove. At the corner of right hand a part of small hut made in bamboo and *kher* will look. There is a open door and small screen. In the left side there is a small fancy made by bamboos. There are some gourds on the roof of the house.

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30. *Bāgh*, Scene- II, p. 44
In its musical side the dramatist uses folk musical instruments, songs and tunes. He uses nāgārā nām to create a rural situation. Such use of native folk music and the model of indigenous properties makes this play as pure Assamese.

Mrigatrilshna (1972):

The theme of Jasantā Saikia's Mrigatrilshna is build-up through the technique of stream of consciousness. Mrigatrilshna is a satire but intellectual play based on contemporary social system. Some critics of Assamese literature considers his Mrigatrilshna as a absurd model drama. The absurd level on Mrigatrilshna as given by the critics is not justifiable. However, some elements of Freudian psychoanalytic method may found in this play. The dramatist portrays the dream or day-dream of a frustrated clerk. The central character of the play is Diganta who is sometimes transforms into different characters, like, Executive Engineer etc. From the beginning to the ending, the dramatist uses narrative method in the presentation of the play. In the beginning of Act one the central character Diganta addresses to the audience and says that he is not the great

31. Ibid, pp. 62-63
Bharali, J.: Nātyakalā Deshi Bideshi, p. 36
magician like P.C. Sarkar and he has also given his bio-data i.e., he is a graduate, his age is thirty seven, he is serving as a clerk, now he is a bachelor ..... etc. ..... He also says his relation with Miss Indira Barua Mrs. Arundhati Chaliha and Miss Urmila Phukan. After that the dramatic sequence begins. Diganta and Indira Barua talks intimately about love. Indira Barua seeks to marry him. But Diganta is not prepared. Then they remembered their past memories. One night they enjoyes a drama namely, 'Pratidâm' on Ban stage in Tejpur. This snap shot then starts. Diganta and Indira suppose to be an audience. Urmila Phukan comes on the stage. She addresses to audience and narrate her personal love story. From the audience sit Diganta and Indira Barua takes part and talks with Urmila Phukan. After that, another female character Arundhati comes on the stage and she offer her love to Diganta. Arundhati married with Mr. Chaliha who never satisfied her mind and body. Hence she wanted to enjoy her life with Diganta. Diganta has refused her proposal. Then she addresses to audience and tells the cause of the background regarding their conjugal dissatisfaction. After that Arundhati becomes too much emotional and she gives kiss Diganta. At that time Mr. Chaliha enters. He shows a knife and tries to attack them. Arundhati cries for police. From audience sit S.P. order O.C. to arrest Mr. Chaliha. Mr. Chaliha surrendered. ..... Now Mr. Diganta Hazarika is an Executive

33. Mrigatrishna, Act- I, pp. 1-4
34. Ibid, pp. 12-15
35. Ibid, pp. 18-20
Engineer, a corrupted officer. He passes the bill of contractors before construction of bridge or road and takes money. The Anti-corruption Department suspects him. C.I.D. Inspector Paresh Dutta arrest him for his offensive activities. At last the Court release him. Then begins another dramatic sequence. The audience look on the stage that Urmila Phukan and Diganta is speaking regarding their marriage. Diganta addresses to the audience and says today their marriage will be held on this stage. Urmila also addresses to the audience and says this place is not suitable for marriage. However, their marriage ceremony has been completed. Then they goes to their bed. After few moments Diganta discovers Indira Baruah is standing in front of him by wearing the dress of bride. At last Indira Baruah dies by eating poison.

In the conclusion Diganta comes to the reality from the sub-conscious stage and he realises that he is Diganta — a clerk — this is the only reality.

The playwright uses the narrative folk-method in its presentation. The theme of the play is complex. But his attempt to communicate with the audience through the dramatis personae makes it intelligible. Such type of technique of direct communication with the audience through the dramatis personae is very popular in folk dramas of our country. Of course, here the playwright applies this style of presentation in a refined and modified form.

36. Ibid, Act-2, p. 56
Manuh:

Saikia’s another play Manuh has written by the impact of absurd philosophy. Although in its content and form we find some elements of absurd drama, at the same time we also find here folk-style in its presentation. The introduction of Sutrâdhâra (narrator) is a common characteristics in all folk-drama. The dramatist of Manuh presented its story by introducing the character of Sutrâdhâra. In the beginning Sutrâdhâra tells about the casting and introduction of the play. After that the main dramatic sequence and problems starts. Sometimes the Sutrâdhâra comes on the stage and he establishes the link with the audience. He also informs to the audience about the mystery of the events. From the beginning to the ending in this play the Sutrâdhâra performs his duty of narration. Even at the end of the play he summarises the result of dramatic story. His active participation helps to understand the spirit of such a complex drama.

Asur:

Basanta Saikia in his play Asur also use narrative method. The central character of the play Haranâth Choudhury is a corrupted, sensualist, vicious person. At the last stage of his life Haranâth Choudhury repents for his vice actions.

37. Manuh Āru Asur, Act- I, pp. 9–10
38. Ibid, pp. 23–34
39. Ibid, Act- 2, p. 57
When he goes to a religious temple to remove his vice action of the past then he faces some questions with a unknown voice. He then expresses the series of vice action of the past through flash back method and narrative technique.

āhār (1971):


Āhār is a play having the properties of absurd drama.

In the strict sense of the term 'absurd', Āhār is not an absurd drama. Satya Prasad Barua has maintains that Āhār may not be considered as an absurd model drama.40 Although the dead body of the woman transforms into different living form i.e., suitor, wife, mother and colgirl and it seems to be absurd, nevertheless the construction of the theme of the play is like the well made play. No doubt the play is full of imaginative sensibilities and poetic qualities and so that it can not be compared with absurd play.41 In Āhār, we find four different characters. They are, Kamal (literature),

40. Barua, Satya Prasad: Nātak Āru Abhinoy Prasanga, p.201
41. Ibid.
Nalini (businessman), Dhiren (revolutionary), Nabin (wine-eater). A dead body of woman was stollen by these four youths from the Gauhati Medical Hospital's morgue. The Hospital authority will spoil and cut the dead body. It is not bearable for the youths. Hence, they brings the dead body and they keep this secretly under North brooke gate. They are waiting under the gate to bury the dead body. When they are absorb in their own emotions the spirit of the dead body transforms into a spirit of woman. After that each character see the spirit of the woman from their own point of view and almost all characters of the play speak something to the audience. The playwright applies the character as an announcer and this is one of the distinctive characteristics of the play. At the end of the play all the characters including the spirit of the woman comes on the middle part of the stage and they offer vote of thanks to the audience. Then the drama ends. Such type of the style of the folk narrative method of communication helps the audience understand the message of this complex play. Hence, it is obvious that the method of presentation of Ahar is a folk narrative method. Of course, it is very difficult to discriminate between form and matter in this play, because the form and matter of the play has dissolved like flesh and blood.

42. Baruā, Bhaben (ed.); Janglap, 1st issue, pp. 22-24, 30, 34, 36, 38 and 44.
Buranji pâth (1978-79):

*Buranji pâth* of Arun Sarmâ expresses a new form of social consciousness. According to Dr. S.N. Sarmâ the dramatist follows the Brechtian style in presentation of this play. Brechtian style is very much similar to our Ankiyâ Bhâvanâ. However, Arun Sarmâ successfully applies this kind of folk art form as the only principal technique in his Buranji pâth. The playwright starts the dramatic sequence by the introduction of Bairâgi (narrator). The Bairâgi says in the oja-pâli style —

Bairâgi: sunâ-sunâ-sunâ, mai bairâgiyâ kaicho.

sunâ-tomâloke sunâ —

mor jolongât khabar

bahuto natun khabar.

târ mäjere bâchi bâchi kao

sunâ-sunâ —

mandi sunâ — cit di sunâ —

bhabdi sunâ — dhayan di sunâ —

bündh sunâ—

sunâ —

Lagariâ: kôwâ-kôwâ-bairâgi

kalehe sunim.

dekhichâ kibâ

jânichâ kibâ

ânichâ kibâ

43. Sarmâ, S.N.: Asamiyâ Nâtyâ Sâhitya, p. 30
natun khabar.
kowā-kowā bairāgi -
begāi kowā. 44

Bairāgi: Listen - listen to - listeno,
I am Bairāgi is speaking
listen to - you listen to me -
my beg is full of news
so many new news.
only the important news I speak.
listen to - listen to -
Attention - Attention -
listen with idea - listen with meditation
- Friends listen to -
Listen to -

Accompany: Jay - say - Bairāgi
After tell we shall hear.
Have you seen anything
Have you known anything
Have you bring anything
New news.
Jay - Jay - Bairāgi -
quickly say.]

In this way the playwright starts the drama. Cintāhāri Choudhury is the Mouzādār of Kānchanguri Mouzā. After his death Kulahāri Choudhury tooks this responsibility. Kulahāri is a freedom fighter. He has lost his Mouzā when he participated in the freedom movement of India. However, after twenty years back the Mouzā returns in his possession. But due to his old age Narahāri Choudhury his son takes the responsibility of the Mouzā. Ramen, Dhiren, Haren and Biren are the four sons of Narahāri Choudhury. Priyārāni is his only daughter from his first wife.

Kulahāri is a virtuous man. He has well conception about the world history. He teaches the important page of world history to his four grand sons. (i.e, he teaches regarding Charls the first of England, French Revolution etc.). All people likes him because of his kindness and helpful attitude. One day suddenly Narahāri Choudhury dies and after his death his daughter Priyārāni takes the charge of Kānchanguri Mouzā. After taking the charge of Kānchanguri Mouzā, Priyārāni harassed the peasants. Even she imposed new higher rate of rents and tax on their peasants. Moreover, she has decided to evict some area for her own interest. Her adviser Mr. Bhuyan, few opportunist villagers and her son Candan proposes to establish an Agricultural Farm in that Char area.

Her grand-father Kulahāri Choudhury with the assistance of his grand sons Ramen, Dhiren, Hamen, Biren mobilises the oppressed class. Then they started their struggle against the oppressive class. Their united force destroys the power of Priyārāni.
This is the story of the play. It is Bairagi who plays a vital role in the development of the play. He explains the subsidiary schemes and matters of the play. Frequently he comes on the stage and he communicates with the audience. Such method of communication helps to understand the complex situation and sequence of the drama. But if it is more, then dramatic suspense may be decrease.

Besides its presentation the playwright has also used folk musical instruments like Nāgārā, sankha, gantā, etc. in the musical side of the play. Likewise pāguri, dhuti etc. such type of traditional dress used by the characters.

_Tejimala_ (1976):

_Prafulla Borā_ is a popular playwright of Assam. His _Tejimala_ creates a huge amount of sensation eighteen years before on the stage of _Kohinur Theatre_ in the different parts of Assam. _Tejimala_ gives a new dimension in the realm of the theatre of Assam. The play begins with a shadow play. At the beginning the audience looks a beautiful white blooming lotus on shadow. The playwright here adopts Cinematic method of presentation. However, in the total production of the play we find a successful application of folk style in its scenes (setting), music and acting. In its production music plays a vital role. The playwright applies about thirty songs in its production.

45. Ibid, pp. 56-57
46. A leading Mobile Theatre party of Assam, Producer Ratan Lahkar.
Among these maximum are folk songs, like, Bangit, Bihugit, Nam, etc. The dramatis personaes, its theme and the spirit of the play obtains a new form by the successful application of this naive folk songs. e.g.,

(1) ᾿APONAR ᾿APON  OI BUKURE KUTUM OI  
kare nāoriā toi ?  
pāt kāporor lāgāte 
māhi āi khundile  
tejimalāhe mai. 47

[Oh my affectionate relative  
who are you boatman?  
It is poor Tejimalā I am  
Only for a silk-cloth  
crushed to death by my  
stepmother 7]

Bihu songs

(2) kelei lägiche sonar gāme khāru  
kelei sāragar sukha  
jibane marane tomāre sārthī  
cenai oli neribī mok. 48

[Why you want gold ring  
why you seek happiness from the heaven  
Oh my beloved, do not leave me  
I am always with you (life and death).]

47. Tejimalā, Prologue, Manuscript.  
48. Ibid, Scene- VI
The dramatist give a special direction regarding the stage craft. He also uses the settings of the play to represent the folklife. So that we find dhenki-shed (dhenki-sāl), Backyard place (bārī), Sākandi etc. Here we also find some traditional materials i.e., kalarvel (banana plant's boat) etc. Such use of folk items enhance the dramatic value of the play.

49. Ibid, Scene- VII
50. Ibid, Scene- IX
**Uttar Purush (1979-80):**

Akhil Chakravarty is a renowned playwright and director of Assam. His famous plays are *Ami Sapnātur, Āi, Gārākāch, Uttar Purush, Tritiya Prahar, Enisār Diary, Abwān, Nakal Nabis, Hātak Āru Nātak, Mānik Bicāri, Ėjan Hājā Āchil* etc. Chakravarty in his long dramatic life he lead off his plays through different experiments.

In his *Uttar Purush*, he applies the narrative story telling folk technique in a refined form. Here the characters transforms into announcer. The drama starts in the following way —

Bibek: **mor janma ketiā haichil mai nājāno**

kintu āi āru deutāi mor nām

rākhicil bibek, mor janmar lage lage

heno ākāshbāni haichil 'tai pratijan mānuhe

mājat gahar kari thākībi, pratijan mānuhe

jimān samayiloi tok ādar kari rakhība, tor

parāmarakha loi kām karib teo simān samayiloi

unnati kari jāb' ............ eyā mor dhāni nibeditā.

eo mor kathābār nibedan kare, byaktik, samājak,

jātik.

Nibeditā: (kar jor kari pratham nāt ārambha karib)

āmi duio āponālokor samukhat thiya haicho

etā kāhini kao sunak: āponālok āji ji thāit

nātyāvinaya cābaloi bahiche thik eyāte etā

jāti āchil. Kristi, sanskriti, banaj sampad,
Bibek: When I came to the world, I do not know. My parents give my name Bibek. When I came to the world a Divine voice said 'You will have to live in every man's mind. While people have take your advice and respects you, they can do progress ....... This is my sister Nibedita.
She express my words - to the individual, society, Nation.

Nibeditā: (She joins her hands and addresses to the audience).
We are two standing in front of you. Please listen, we will tell a story - in this place where you come to see dramatic performance - actually here was a nation. The Nation was very rich among the Indian Nation about their culture, forest resource, coals, language - literature).

Gradually one after another character enters on the stage and the character of Bibek and Niveditā itself transforms into different characters in different situations. Uttar Purush is a play of remembrance of our past tradition. The technique which he adopts in order to present the message of the play is a narrative direct communicative method. Through this method the playwright depicts some significant snaps of our remote

51. Uttar Purush, p. 1
past and alarks the post-generation. Here the contents (matter) of the play dissolves with the style of its presentation and with their appropriate mixture enhance dramatic rasas.

Besides the style of presentation, the playwright so uses folk items in its musical and dance sides. He uses Biyā nām and other folk songs. e.g.,

Biyā nām (marriage song)

(1) āhiche gobinda gosai garundate uthi āgoāri vismak rajāi karichehi stuti.

(Govinda Goshāi come on the wings of Garur. The King Bhismak joins his hand for stuti). 52

Tune traditional folk song

(2) jayā nāi, jayā nāi
asami āire cenehar ji
sati jayamati nāi
jayā nāi jayā nāi. 53

(jayā is absent, jayā is absent.
The affectionate daughter of Assam Jayā, the great woman is absent
Jayā is absent, jajā is absent).

The dramatist suggests to use folk-dance of Deodhani 54 to create a effective dramatic sequence.

52. Ibid, p. 4
53. Ibid, p. 6
54. Ibid, p. 40
Ejan Rajā-Ančil (1988):

When the king forgets his duties and responsibilities, when the sufferings and oppression of people increase, even the child do not excludes by the oppression of king, — then the mass people start their revolution. Even the son stands against the oppressive father. Mass people seeks freedom and socialism for the establishment of peace, harmony, humanism and religion. This is the theme of the play Ejan Rajā-Ančil of Akhil Chakravarty. Here the playwright displays how a oppressive king with his ministers severly oppressed on his people. The king stands as oppressor not as the protector of the people. The dramatist presented the above noted theme through Sutrādhār and his assistants. The essence of the play is its application of pure Assamese Satriya songs and dance which helps to increase its dramatic value. This skilfull application of the Ankiyā Bhāvanā style (form) is appropriately mixed with its matter (content).

Mahārāja (1983):

Jatish Bhattāchāryya in his Mahārāja applied the ojā-pāli as story telling method. Ojā-pāli is a very strong traditional communicative art. The play begins in the following way —

Gān

Sunā sunā savāsad rājār kāhini /
dāsirupe rājgrīhe āne bidesini //
dāsir mantranā tāir putra haiba rājā /
athantar dekhī hāhākār kare prajā //
rajabole prajar mai pitrir sarup /
prajar kārane karo vāl manda jata /\0

Listen listen the people, the story of king.
He brings the foreigner as slave
in the king's palace.
According to the conspiracy of slave, her son will be king
Hence, the people cries.
King's idea is — he is the father of the people,
I do everything for the interest of the people.7

pratāpaditta is a king of imaginary kingdom. Gāngi is.
his illegal queen. Prince Bikram is the son of pratāpaditta
and Gāngi is his mother. Bikram is unruly. One day the prince
Bikram brings byforce a peasant's daughter (Mālati) and he also
imprisons her father (Jagatbandhu). The Prince Bikram is the
future king of the kingdom. So that the people displeases on
the prince activities and behaviour. Ultimately they rebeles
against their future king and they demands to punish him.
According to their demands the king pratāpaditta punishes him
and he declares that the Prince Bikram can not be the king. The
king establishes socialism in his kingdom and he himself keeps
as a king by name.

The playwright presented the above noted story through the
introduction of Ojā-pāli. The application of traditional folk
dramatic institution in a modern play is very risky. Satish

55. Maharājā, Scene- I, p. 1
Bhattacharyya tries to experiment this kind of folk-style. In Maharaja, we find a gap between its form and content. Hence the last dramatic scene (application of ojä-päli) bores the audience and they return from the auditorium with empty hands.

Bayanar Khol (1982):

Bayanar khol of Jugal Das is a very popular play. The play successfully performs by the different amateur groups on the different stages in the different parts of Assam. Here the playwright applies ankiyā Bhāvanā style in its presentation. In the beginning of the play the central character, Bāyan beats a khol (small drum) then he recites (praise) slokes (hymns) as like as the Sutradhāra in an ankiyā Nāṭ. After that Bāyan in his day dream begins to dance of sutradhāri dance. Gradually, the dramatis personae enters on the stage and the story of the play starts.

Bāyan is a dedicated artist of Sankari culture. Traditionally, the villagers has been performing Bhāvana on the occasion of the death anniversary of Mahāpurush Sankardeva. Now-a-days, the young generation seeks to perform modern theatre on the death anniversary of Sankardeva. In order to perform a modern theatre the village youth selects a modern play. Jayrām an educated young man considers as the director of the play. Tagar, the only daughter of Bāyan will also take part in the theatre. The Gāyan (assistants of Bāyan), Medhi, Māster, Gāonburhā and other leading

56. Bayanar khol, scene- I, p. 17
man of the village also contents to celebrate the proposed modern theatre. Bāyan never accepts such kind of attitudes and this decision of the youths gives immense agony to him. He becomes irritated and extreme emotional. Then he beats his khol and dances in the Sutradhāri style to an extreme position. At last the youths and the other villagers has been able to realize the significance of Bāyan’s opinion.

The playwright very successfully presented this story through the Ankiyā Bhāvanā style. The technique of presentation mixed with the contents of the play like flesh and blood. Such a proper application of folk-style with a traditional theme and characters will remove the lithery of dramatic sequences. Other dramatic properties like, kāhi-bāti, kalah, cariā, batā, murā etc., relating to customs and practical life of the characters helps to create a real picture of folk society.

Ājan (1989):

The story element of Mahendra Barthākur’s Ājan is partly derived from history and partly from legend. Ājan phakir is a religious preacher. The story of the play is made up on the basis of Ājan phakir’s life. The playwright applies the jikir Gits as the method of presentation to connect the link with the dramatic sequences. The play begins in the following way —

Ghosā:
rahāmar girihat tumī allā chāhāb oi
yadi karā dariyār pār /
pad :  

```plaintext
pākhi dābi mārile  ājānar duvāyi
bāmat sajāi dile nāo,
sarāguri cāparit  nāok varādile
bāsāt thākile tēo //^7
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Ghosā : O God you are the master of slaves
You can give us freedom from physical bondage.

pad :  
The two brothers of Ājān
makes the boat on earth,
He loads the boat at Saraguri Capari
He stays on his hut.

Ājān phakir wrote many devotional songs, popularly known as Jikir. The playwright here uses this devotional songs from beginning to the ending of the play. The dramatic theme is narrated by a Jikir troupe. The theme of the play is appropriately mixed with its style of presentation and hence the value of dramatic appeal increases.58

Dhumuḥā Pakhir Nīr (1989) :

During 7th and 8th decade of the 20th century some playwrights of Assam tries to synthesises between Western and Eastern techniques. Among these, Āli Hāidar is one of the remarkable name who derives the essence of his plays from the west and East. Hāidar composed and directed so many plays. He also applies folk-style in his Dhumuḥā Pakhir Nīr, Yuga Sandhi

57. Dās, Jogesh (ed.) : Adhināyak, 1st Yr. 1st issue, 1989, p. 16
58. In Chapter- IV we have discussed regarding the structure of the story of the play.
Khanar Kābyā, Ekhan Nilāj Mānugar Desh, and Kuprathā.

The play *Dhumuha pakhir nir* was written in 1977 but published in 1989 in *Adhināyaka*. This is a notable play. Here the dramatist instructs to use *guru gāt* at the beginning of the play in an *Ankhyā Bhāvanā* style. After that the *Sutradhāra* dance begins. The *Sutradhāra* addresses —

*Sutradhāra*: he darsakvirda, ājir nātakar mai *Sutradhāra*.

dujon mor sahayogi.

Pratham dut: mai pratham dut.

Ditiya dut: mai ditiya dut.

Choras: nātyakārār baktavya, silpi āru darsakar āmi yogasutra.

*Sutradhāra*: Oh! my audience, I am the *Sutradhāra* (narrator) of today's play. This are my two assistants.

First assistant: I am the first assistant.

Second assistant: I am the second assistant.

Choras: We are the only communicator between artist and audience and the theme of the dramatist.

*Sutradhāra* first introduces the central character — *Satyakām Barua*. *Satyakām Barua* is an ideal teacher and a dedicated social worker. While on the one hand he seeks to preserve the old values, on the other hand his three sons and two daughters

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60. Dās, Jogeshw (ed.): *Adhināyak*, 1989, June, p. 27
seeks to change the social system according to their own paths and outlooks. In this play we find the conflict of modernism with the old values of life. Haidar directly adopts the Ankiyā Bhāvanā style in this play. Sutradhāri, his two assistants and Chorus frequently come on the stage and they tells about the nature of conflict among the characters. Sometimes the dramatis personae also transforms into announcer. However, such type of application of the technical devices disturbs to the test of serious audience. Haidar's selection of the plot and the style of production is nodoubt appropriate, but his treatment is defective.

Besides the above mention dramas we must mention some other significant plays. Medelua of Jugal Dās is a notable production. This play has written before twenty five years ago, on the basis of tea garden's life. In 1987 the Directorate of Cultural Affairs of Assam presented Medelua through the folk songs of tea labourers. Jagadish Pātgiri in his Natun Purush sufficiently use folk elements in its entire production. Ananda Mohan Bhāgabati in his Jatugriha and Dusāsan uses Sutradhāra in an Ankiyā Bhāvanā style.Ārup Chakravarty in his Āgamanī adopts narrative story telling technique. He applies the dramatic characters as a Sutradhāra (narrator). Rām Goswāmi also uses this method of style in his Palāsar Rang in the character of Jayanta. Munin Bhuyan applies Goalpariā loka git as a technique of presentation in his Hāti Āru Phāndi. He also uses Bihu songs as a method of style in presenting the theme of his jaro Rowā parajā. Phani Talukdar in his āgni parikshā uses direct
communicative method. Karunā Dekā in his Chang adopts Kāmrupiā Dhuliā as a method of presentation. He also uses Jāgārā Nām in his Nirmān parba, Rafiqul Hussain in his Kaurab Pāndab and Droupadi uses Ojā-pāli in its style of presentation. Paramānanda Rājborgshi in his Nāṅgal Māṭi Āru Mānuh also uses Khuliā Bhāwaria as a method of style in its production. Pramod Dās in his Hanumān Sāgar Bandhā Sāu applies Thiya-nām and marriage song (Bīā-nām) prevalent in Barpeta area with the modern technique of production in presenting the theme which through the flashback sequences, traced the history of dowry system and dowary deaths from the mythological period to the modern times. Sītā Nath Lahkar in his Agnigarva also successfully applies oja-pali as a method of style in its presentation.