MUSICAL ASPECTS OF THE OJAPALI

Music is an integral part of the ojapali art form, since the words of the songs and poems tell the story. The ojapali music is a triple symphony of gita and vadya as well as nrtya. As Sarangadeva observes, "gītām vādyām tatha nrtyam trayam saṅgītamuṣya." Hence this audio-visual art form may rightly be called saṅgīta. It has already been mentioned that the ojapali circle describes the art as gandharva-vidya. The gandharva-music is so called because it belonged to Gandharvas and it was very dear to gods. Bapat in accordance with the explanation of Sayana observes that Gandharva is one who maintains the speech of gods in the form of songs. The Taittirīya Aranyaka refers to the Gandharva. "It seems that the Samana-singers were connected with the sacrifice, while

1. P. S. S. Sastri (ed): Sarangadeva's Saṅgitaratnakara, 1/1/21
3. Supra-chapt. III
4. Nātyaśāstra, xxviii. 9
5. D. Bapat: Vaidika Saṅgīta, p. 3
6. iti ekadosa gandharvasatāh, / I. IX. 3
the Gandharvas were the professional musicians. The word Gandharva denoted music other than the Sāmana-music. Of course, the Sāmana-music must have given impetus to the Gandharva music. The Ramayana refers to Gandharva. The word Gandharva has been used in the two inscriptions of Rudradāman (2nd century A.C.) and Samudra Gupta (4th century A.C.) to denote the sense of music.

According to the Nātya-sāstra Gandharva music is based on svara, tāla and pada as well as various musical instruments.

The Nārādiyasīkṣā defines Gandharva as:

geti geyam viduh prājñā gheti kārūpavādanam,
veṭi vādyasya saṁjhñeyāṁ gandharvasya nirocanam

The commentary of Vattasobhākara explains the term gandharva in this way: 'ga' stands for song, āhā for the playing of vīnā and 'va' stands for the playing of other instruments.
The ojāpāli music is based on svara, tāla, pada and various musical instruments. As such, the music of the ojāpāli art form may rightly be called as gandharva music. The vacika aspect of abhinava is exhibited by the music of the ojāpāli.

One of the unique features of the ojāpāli music is the high-pitched voice of both the oja and the pali. Like the bhāgavatār of Yaksagāna, the oja of the ojāpāli art form renders a poem or a song or a pada at a high pitch but unlike the bhāgavatār, the oja and the pali do not abruptly end the musical phrase. Unlike the bhāgavatār, the oja does not stop abruptly after singing one or two words. The oja completes the rāga or tune with the aid of pālis. In the ojāpāli music, specially the biyāh-gowa ojāpāli music, the oja oscillates his voice, and quivers it back and forth from one note to another. Such transition of the oja is certainly smooth and pleasing.

Like the Yaksagāna, the ojāpāli art form is an open-air performance. Hence, the music must be of a style that lends itself to being heard for some distance. This factor probably accounts for the high pitch of the bhāgavatār's voice.¹²

This also true in respect of the ojāpāli music.

Ojāpāli music, particularly music of the biyāh-gowa variety, is surely a pāncānga saṅgīta, i.e., five-fold music.

¹² M.B. Ashton: Yaksagāna, p. 60

B. Christie
viz. (a) alāpa, (b) guru-vandana, (c) Visnupada, (d) saṅgītālāpa and (e) jhūna or jhūnā.

(a) Bivah-gowā-ōjāpāli music:

The first step of the five-fold music of the bivah-gowā form is svara-sādhana or alāpa, i.e., musical exposition of some rāga or melody note which begins with such syllables as ha, ta, nā, ri(r) and rīṭā (ṛtā). The ojāpāli circle of Darrang explains the syllables in the following way:

\[\text{hā varne tu ganādhyaśah} /\]
\[\text{tā varne tu sadāśiva} /\]
\[\text{nā varne tu māhāmāyā} /\]
\[\text{ri(r) varne tu kaṁsa vaīri kṛṣṇah} /\]
\[\text{rīṭā(ṛtā)varne tu gandharvah} /\]

—who stands for Gaṇapati,
—who stands for Śaḍāśiva,
—who stands for Brahmā,
—who stands for Kṛṣṇa (or Viṣṇu),
—who stands for Gandharva

M. Neog: Sattriya Dances of Assam and their Rhythm, p. 12
A.C. Barua: Ojāpāli: Its Different Types and Functions, p. Notes
Informants: Sri Sarat Chandra Sarma, ojā, Vyāsapara, data collected on 16.1.85
: Sri Durgeswar Nath ojā, Bipajhār, data collected on 15.6.84
: Sri Nareswar Sarma Barua, Dipila, data collected on 18.8.81
: Sri Lalit Chandra Nath ojā, Sipajhār, data collected on 26.8.81
Although A.O. Barua holds the view that the svara-sadhana or alapa may be termed as the guru-vandanā, i.e. obeisance to the pentad of gods\(^\text{14(a)}\) nevertheless it cannot be termed as the guru-vandanā, since the guru-vandanā follows only after the alapa. Observes M. Sastri: "at the end of the svara-sadhana or sura-sadhana (i.e. alapa) the guru-vandanā is performed by the ojāpali.\(^\text{14(b)}\) The ojāpali circle believes that the svara-sadhana or sura-sadhana is the very basis of the different rāgas. Hence, it is said: rāgar guri tā-nā-nā", i.e., the basis of rāga is tā-nā-nā. Both the gīja and the pālis recite the svara-sadhana without the help of any musical instrument. The duration of the alapa is around fifteen minutes.\(^\text{15}\) The next step of the alapa is guru-vandanāmi, i.e., prologue. The ojā and the pālis sing a long pada or verse containing the eulogy of God Viṣṇu or Vasudeva either in the Sindhurā rāga or in the Rāmagiri or Rāmakiri rāga.\(^\text{16}\) The ojāpali troupe sings the guru-vandanā with the help of musical instruments and dance. However, they cannot move from the standing place at the time of dance in respect of guru-vandanā. The tāla of the singing of guru-vandanā is jikari. The song sung in respect of guru-vandanā is styled as Pātani-gīta, i.e.,

\(^{14}\text{(a)}\) A.O. Barua, op.cit., p. 4
\(^{14}\text{(b)}\) M. Sastri, op.cit., p. 83
\(^{14}\text{(b)}\) Ibid
\(^{15}\) Ibid.

Informant: Sri Nareswar Sarma Barua, Dipila, data collected on 18.8.91

\(^{16}\) According to Nareswar Sarma Barua and Sri Durgeswar Nath ojā the guru-Vandanā is sung either in the Gunjari-rāga or in the Bhramari-rāga.
introductory-song, since, the very beginning of actual saṅgīta is indicated by the Vandana-song. The pātani gītā may be either one or two. The first gītā begins with the following verse:

śrīkṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya daiyānī nandanāya ca/
nanda gopa kumārāya govindāya namōnamah //

The second Vandana includes a few songs which are sung in different rāgas, such as sūranga, susūranga, āta, deṣaga, dibagara, svāma-gara, gandagiri, rāmagiri, barādi and dhanaśri. But the ojaṇāli troupe sings only one gītā. At the beginning of the second Vandana-gītā the ojaṇāli commences a rāga with the rāga mentioned above, i.e. śrīkṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya... At the end of the rāga the pāliṣṭ stand in semi-circular shape keeping the oja in the right middle part of the semi-circle. Both the oja and the pāliṣṭ dance with gestures and rhythms. The tālas used by them are lecharī and jikari.

Both the alāpa and the guru-vandana as well as the pātani gītā may be termed as a stage which is known as the Gurumandali or gādā or ghunni. To complete this step at least fifteen minutes are essential. 17

17. M. Sastri, op.cit., p.83
The third step of the music of the biyāh-gowa form of oja is visnupada, i.e., songs of Viṣṇu. The Viṣṇu-pada\textsuperscript{18} is a primarily dance-based performance. The rāga used in the visnupada is known as Viṣṇu-rāga or Viṣṇu-padar dhek, i.e., rāga of visnupada. The active bearers of the biyāh-gowa art form cannot ascertain the name of the rāgas in which they sing the visnupada and hence they call it visnupadarāga\textsuperscript{19}. The refrain repeated by the pālis is called the visnupadar thāk or thawar or carana, i.e., pitch of the visnupada. The pitch varies from three to seven. At the end of each pitch, the pālis dance in semi-circular shape and the oja shows different dance-movements along with different mudrās while he sets a particular rāga for the pālis and offers salutation to the altar, i.e., Vāsudeva with the svastika-mudrā. The pitch begun with the first carana goes up to the maximum height in the fourth carana and begins to descend from the fifth carana and ends in the seventh carana.\textsuperscript{20} Then the oja isha sings the songs pertaining to the description of Viṣṇu's ten incarnations. Generally, biyāhar

\textsuperscript{18} M. Sastri, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 83

\textsuperscript{19} Informants: Sri Nareshwar Sarma Barua, Dipila, data collected on 18.9.81
Sri Durgeswar Nath oja, Sipajhar, data collected on 18.9.81

\textsuperscript{20} M. Sastri, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 83-84
ojāpāli sings the dasāvatāra-varnana of the Gītā-govinda of Jayadeva. But very often the ojāpāli sings it from other sources also. Since, all oja donot know Sanskrit they sing the dasāvatāra-varnana written in the Assamese language. The talas used in this step are cab-tala and cautāla as well as lecheri tāla. Then, according to D. Nath oja, the ojāpāli troupe sings a mālītā(etiological ballad) pertaining to the origin of the rabhā, i.e., pandel.

The fourth step of the bīvāc-gowa ojāpāli music is saṅgītālāpā, i.e., playing of musical tone or cāvar-bānā or gāṅkar-rāga, i.e., ideal rāga.21 This rāga-form is occasionally presented both as the notes of ascending order, i.e., ārohi and as the notes of descending order, i.e., avarōhi, by the ojāpāli troupe and hence it is called the gāṅkar-rāga. The ojāpāli performance gets a start along with this rāga and so it is called gor-bānā, i.e., the first rāga. The striking style of tālas of this rāga is quite different from other rāgas. So, it is known as cāvar-bānā. According to, late Narayana Sarma Upadhyaya, Mālava, the king of rāgas is sung as the song of cāvar-bānā.22

The saṅgītālāpā may again be subdivided into five categories, viz., (a) rāga, (b) mālītā, (c) bānā (d) dīnā and (e)pada.23

21. M. Sastri, op.cit., p.83
22. Ibid.
23. According to M. Sastri it is not pada, but is thoka, op.cit., p.84
(a) Rāga: The rāgas used in this step have seven sections, viz., (i) hūmikara, or svara sādhanā, i.e. musical exposition,

(ii) āhūrī or upasthāpana or presentation; (iii) tolānt or ārohi or notes employed in ascending order;

(iv) mālītā or janmālāpā or etiological narrative;

(v) sarana or mūrcchana or the gradual āroha (ascent) and avaroḥa (descent) of the seven notes.24

(vi) āhūrā or avaroha or notes used in descending order;

(vii) dīnā or saṅkāri or notes employed in ascent and descent in a mixed manner.

(b) Mālītā: The rāga used in this step should have begun with the mālītā, i.e., etiological ballad of that rāga.

(c) Bānā: The term bānā denotes singing of a rāga in its high pitch.25 According to M. Neog bānā is nothing but a particular melody mode in which a song is sung.26 There is a mālītā current amongst the ojāpāli circle regarding the origin of bānā. The mālītā states that sage Narada learnt the art of singing of

24. "The Nāṭya-sāstra defines that mūrcchanas are so called because in them the seven notes are used in order (śūrā-kāma). This order is explained by Abhinava as ascent and descent."

G. H. Tarlekar: Studies in the Nāṭya-sāstra, p. 152

25. M. Sastri, op. cit., p. 84

different rāgas from Lord Śiva. Being over-sure sage Nārada began to sing the rāgas without the aid of the Viṇa, i.e., Indian lute. Being crippled the rāgas fell down on the earth. The rāgas then advised Nārada to return back to Kailāsa and to apprise Śiva about his problem. Nārada did accordingly. Śiva taught him the art of singing of the rāgas combined with the lute.27

Another such episode is mentioned by A. Coomaraswamy in his book entitled The Dance of Shiva : when sage Nārada was still but a learner of the rāgas out of pride he thought that he had mastered the whole art of music; but the all-wise Viṣṇu, to curb his pride, revealed to him in the world of the gods, a spacious building where there lay men and women weeping over their broken arms and legs. They were the rāgas and rāginīs, and they said that sage Nārada, ignorant of music and unskilled in performance, had sung them wrongly, and therefore their features were distorted and their limbs broken, and until they were sung truly there would be no cure for them. Then Nārada prayed to Viṣṇu to be taught the art of music perfectly. By the grace of Viṣṇu Nārada became the greatest musician priest of the gods. 28

27. Informant: Nareswar Sarma Barua, Dipila, data collected on 18.9.81
28. A. Coomaraswamy: The Dance of Shiva, pp. 106-07
The ojāpāli circle believes that the term bāna comes from the word vīna or bīna. So, it may be assumed that originally the vīna, a tata-vādyya was associated with the ojāpāli art form.²⁹

(a) Dīha : The word dīha comes from Sanskrit disa.³⁰ The term dīha seems to be the synonym of dhruva. The Nātya-sāstra states that the Gandharvaveda was used in the preliminaries and in the actual performance in the form of dhruva songs and as an accompaniment to various movements.³¹ Bharata suggests that after the singing of the notes of the particular melody, accompanied by instrumental music; the dhruva song should be started. The dhruva song contains a few gaṇas, viz., sthāyī, antara, saṅcārī and abhoga.³³ Sthāyī is the repetition of the same note or notes steadily.³⁴ Dīha in the biyā-gōva ojāpāli acts as sthāyī, since the pālis repeat it steadily after every carana sung by the ojā.

²⁹ Informant: Nareswar Sarma Barua, Dipila, data collected on 18.9.81
³⁰ dīha/Skt.disa + aka, the term disa is still to be found in currency in Bengali language. It is an important part of the kavīgāna.
³¹ G.H. Tarlekar, op.cit., p.3
³² Ibid., p.106
³³ Swami Prajnanananda: Development of Music in Sanskrit (Readings on Music and Dance, ed. G. Kapuswamy & M. Haribarana) p.3
³⁴ G.H. Tarlekar, op.cit., p.158
Diha is of two kinds: (a) bandha diha, i.e. closed refrain and (b) kholadiha, i.e. open refrain. The dihas sung along with raga and banga are called bandha-diha and the dihas which are not sung along with raga and banga are styled as kholā-diha. 35

(e) Pāda: "Pada means either a word or a subordinate sentence. There would be 4, 8 and 16 padas for caturasra type and 3, 6 and 12 for Trāyasra type. The Nātṛ, gives two views- pada as the foot of the verse, hence there would be 2 or 3 verse, and pada as a word." 36

The word pada, i.e., story or verse suggests verses that are sung by the oja of the ojāpāli troupe at the time of performance. The Nātya-śāstra states that the pada is an essential constituent of Gāndharva-music. 37 According to Bhatta a conscious melodious employment of Svara, tala and pada have resulted in Gāndharva-music. 38 B. Datta holds that the term diha may be equated with the word ghosa, i.e. the part of a song or verse in which the associate joins the singer or chanter. But the term ghosa has no currency in the biyāh-gowā ojāpāli tradition.

35. Informant: Burgeswar Nath Oja, Sipajhar, data collected on 18.9.81
36. G.H. Tarlekar, op. cit., p. 223
37. yattu tantrikrtam proktam nānātodyamāsrayam/
gāndharvamiti tajjeyam svaratālapadātmakam //
Nātya-śāstra. Vol. IV, p. 5, verse 8
38. Dattilam II.3
So, it can be assumed that pada is an important part of dhruva-music. The Andhra's musical heritage maintains that pada is a class of music which may rightly be styled as the erotic lyric. He thinks: "a padam required more details of aesthetic expression by way of developing the melodic structure with intricate nuances, thereby bringing out the minute shades of the mental attitude."

The word pada has different uses in different contexts in the Assamese language. Such as:

(i) it is used to indicate songs; i.e.;
   biyāy pāda; i.e. songs of marriage.
   ojāpāli pāda; i.e.; songs of ojāpāli

(ii) pada is an Assamese chanda; i.e.; metree and

(iii) pada indicates verses.

In the ojāpāli context the term pada indicates both song and verse. Pada may be divided into two (a) nibaddha and (b) anibaddha. The padas bound by tāla, yati etc. are called

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40. Ibid., p.110
41. G.H. Tarlekar, op.cit., p.147
nibaddha -padas and the padas which are not bound by any tāla, rāga, etc. are known as anibaddha-pada. The fifth step of music of the biyāh-gowa-ojāpāli is jhuna or juna, i.e., light song and puwelī-gīta, i.e., song of morning. The term jhuna or juna carries two connotations: firstly, it is an Assamese metre. Secondly, jhuna or juna is a song containing light and folk elements. It seems to be sensual, erotic and crude. Jhuna or juna song was a later development since the singing and recitation of juna was regarded as taboo. According to the old active bearers of the biyāh-gowa form of ojāpāli the act of singing juna publicly was not allowed and even the singer might have to face dire consequences like death, etc. As for example, once the biyāh-gowa-ojāpāli was invited to perform their performance at the out-break of cholera. At the end of the performance, someone amongst the audience requested the ojā to sing a juna song. The ojā flatly refused to do so. But a pāli sang a juna -song ignoring the prohibitory order of the ojā. In the evening the pāli along with the ojā and other pālis returned back home and the pāli who sang the juna publicly was attacked by cholera at night and breathed his last within a very short time.

43. Informant: Sri Bhabiram Sarma, Vyasapara, Darrang, data collected on 16.1.85
The proper biyāh-gowa ojā, i.e., the ojā hailing from the village Vyāsapāra does not sing junā songs even now. However, they generally sing puwelī-gīta and other devotional songs instead of junā-gīta. But those who are not included in the ambit of the traditional biyāh-gowa-ojāpāli may sing junā-gīta.

The theme of junā songs may be either Siva and Parvati or Radha and Kṛṣṇa and their love-dalliance. A few junā songs have been composed viewing the poverty stricken lives of Lord Siva and goddess Parvati. A junā-gīta is given below as a specimen:

\[
\begin{align*}
diha & : \text{ahe saṅkara jāga digambara rāi} / \\
pada & : \text{ratna āasanata dhari caranata} \\
& \text{jagawe pārvatī āi //} \\
Utāḥa prāṇa prabhu jagatāre guru & \\
& \text{grhe cāula muthi nāi} / \\
& \text{kartika ganapati tomāra dui putra} \\
& \text{bhoke bari dukha pāya //} \\
& \text{ainara cawāle kāndile kānile} \\
& \text{pithā paramanma pāya /} \\
& \text{āmara cawāle kāndibe lāgicle} \\
& \text{grhe khuda kaṇa nāi //}
\end{align*}
\]

44. Informant: Sri Bhabiram Sarma Ojā, Vyāsapāra, Darrang
Data collected on 16.1.85
parvatīra bānī śuniya śāṅkare
krodhe bulilanta māti /

yidinā śāṅkara bhikṣāka nagaile
sei dināi tekeli kāti //

tai bola pārvtī māti bar kājī
aji parman pālo tāra /
dekhane sūnane cocane mājane
beti tora mukha khañe sāra //

nidrāra jāgiya uṭhila śāṅkara
parvatīra mukha cāi /

bhṛṅgarara jale mukha pakhañilā
tarpura tāmbola khāi //
cāula cirāmuthi anā pārevati
āthiyā kalere khāo /

jhuli bokondalī anā pārevati
bhikṣā mañibaka yāo //

jalapan kari māthe merā pāga
gave bhaṣma dhūli lailā /

hāte sula dambaru jagatara guru
bhikṣā mañibaka gaila //

bhṛṅgatale yāi jhuli meli cāi
kichu pāilā dhowapāta /
sthai: O Lord Śiva, kindly get up from bed.

pada: Touching the feet of Lord Śiva, goddess Pārvatī made an attempt to awake Śiva.

"O my Lord, O the great Soul of the world,

Not a handful of rice is available in our houses.

Kārtika and Gānapati the only two sons of you - are crying for they are hungry.

The children of others get cake and paramāṇa if they cry.
But our children are crying but the misfortune is that there is not even a broken grain of rice."

Being angry with Pārvatī, Lord Śiva says:

45. N.Sarma Barua(ed): Gita-Malci-Wandana, pp.4-6
"O Parvati, I have had sufficient proofs that you are not an able lady and your deed shows that your boasts are nothing more than empty vessels that sound much."

Lord Siva gets-up from sleep and washes his hands and mouth and chews betel-nut with karpūra. He, then, eats light food with banana and makes necessary arrangements for going to alms.

Lord Siva puts on a turban and covers his body with ashes.

Holding the trident, the Lord of the world starts for begging.

Being tired he sits under a tree for a while. Thereupon he begins to smoke hemp.

Says Madan Murāri "Behold this family life — the Lord of the world lives on alms, what would be the condition of others?

The ideas of Kavīra and the riddling language of his compositions seem to be echoed in some junā songs. Such songs are known as kavīra-gītā or pāṭchāhī-gītā. A kavīra-gītā is given as an example.

dīha : ahe mūrukha tora ki niyama dhārana //

bhāi pandita tora ki prātasa oilāna //
ekacola jalate dui matsya upajaya
śāla śāula dui jana /
Śa'īlaka dhari āni bbakate bhunjaya
salaka karila mana //
nite cilāna kare pānīra pānī kāuri
nite cilāna kare udp
nite cilāna kare sādhu mahājana
kon khini karīla sūdha //
domare birāli caru bādi lutila
śāla śīngi lutila pānī /
ujanira ghātate hindui bārām dhowe
bhāṭīra ghāte muchalamānī //
bāmumara bidhavai māch māmsa tejilā
pānī ṭopa kimate khāī /
dui cāri phakirai kavīrāta sodhaya
kabeto kavīrā bhāī //
kabeto kavīrā edāsa phakirā
era āla jala dhānda /
era āla ajala biṣaya jaṅjala
hari nāma galate bandha //

46. N. Sarma Barua, op.cit., Pp.33-34
Diha: O fool, what is the sense of your religious observances?
O wise, what is the necessity of your morning bath?

Pada:
Both the sala and the saula fishes are born in the same water.
But the devotees eat the saula fish and forbid the sala fish.
The cormorant also takes bath always and the otter too takes bath there.
Saintly persons also take bath in the same water,
So, how can a saintly person be purified?
The cat of a fisherman desecrates the cooking pots of others and the sala fish and the singh fish pollute the water.
The Hindus wash the forbidden materials in the upper bathing place of a river and the Muslims too wash forbidden materials in the lower bathing place of the same river.
The Brahmin's widow gives up meat and fish but how can she drink water where fishes live?
Saint Kavira says: 'Relinquish the unreal world, take refuge on the feet of Lord Hari.'

The puwelī-gīta, i.e., the song of the morning is sung generally at the very dawn without having any musical instrument by the biyāh-gowa variety. It is also a kind of rāga-music. According to the active bearer of this form of the ojāpali, the puwelī-gīta is sung in the pūrvayī-rāga. e.g.

dīhā : gośala, jāga jāga nārāyana /
pada : phēhū dīlā jāli uthā banamāli
    caudisē pohara bhaila /
    bañara harini   banata lukāila
    pakṣī dasōdiše gaila //
pūhaila rajanī  uthā yadumāni
    buli dāke sīsugana /
tāla khola bēnu mradaṅga bājiče
    jāga jāga nārāyana //
guñjarē bhrāmāre  bhakata sakale
    sukhē bahī nāma gāya /
devara devatā   daivakī nandana
    tāra saṅgha saṅgha yāya //47

47. N. Sarma Barua, op. cit. pp. 14-15
di'flj : 0 Gopala, rise from sleep
0 Narayana,
Pada : The dawn is breaking, get up 0 Banamalī,
There is light on all sides,
The hinds have disappeared into the forest
The birds are on their wings,
The cowherd boys call, "0 Yadumani
get up, it is morning."
Cymbals, drums, flutes and mrdangas are playing
get up, 0 Narayana.
The bumblebees are humming,
The devotees are chanting your name happily,
The son of Daivakī, the god of gods sustains them.

The biyāh-gowa ojāpāli music ends with a stuti or prayer

to god Vāsudeva or Narayana or Kṛṣṇa or Rāma from the book
from which the pada is sung by the ojāpāli.

The traditional biyāh-gowa ojāpāli sings jāgara-gīta
by holding a tauryyatrika-yantra or mudrā on the occasion of the
jāgara-worship of Vāsudeva or Siva or Durgā. According to M. Sastrī
sura and tāla of these songs are quite different. In the jāgara-
worship particularly at the Durgā-jāgara the ojāpāli of the
of the traditional biyāh-gowa variety sings some mālsīs or mālōīs
holding the mudrā-yantra. The mālsī seems to be a corrupt form
of the term malavasri or malasika or malasi, i.e. songs sings in the malavasri raga. The theme of the malasī songs is the glory of goddess Durga or Gāndhikā. M. Sastri is of opinion that the songs of jagara are started with the Pranava and are ended with the same by the oja of ojapali troupe of the biyāh-gowā form. The active bearers of the biyāh-gowā ojapali variety are of opinion that the tradition of the jagara festival started with the Markendeya-purāṇa:

markanda purāṇa bicāriyā rsirāja /
seidina jagaraka karilanta bāja //

The sage Vṛhaspati discovered the jagara festival and the associated songs from the Markendeya-purāṇa. According to the jagara-songs current among the biyāh-gowā ojapali art form, the jagara-festival was solemnized by Citrasena Gandharva at the behest of Lord Siva and the jagara-songs were sung by Citrasena accompanied by other Gandharvas holding the mudra-yantras:

om citrasena gandharva cāhi trinayana /
hasiyā kautuka hena bulilā badana //

48. Nātyalocana, 9th-13th century
49. Jyotirisvara's Varna-ratnakar
50. M. Sastri, op. cit., p. 80

Informants: Sri Nareswar Sarma Barua, Dipila, data collected on 18.9.81
Sri Sarat Chandra Sarma, oja, Vyasapara, data collected on 16.1.85
Trinayana ordered Citrasena Gandharva to perform nṛtya-gīta publicly by holding the mudrā-yantra. Citrasena did accordingly.

It has also been said that sage Vṛhaspati after being discovered the jagara in the Markandeya-purāṇa presented the same to Citrasena Gandharva. After solemnizing the jagara-festival along with the jagara-gīta-nṛtya presented the same to the sage Nārada. And thus, the jagara-music gets currency in the world of the mortals.52

At the time of the jagara-pūjā, particularly in the night the jagara gīta and nṛtya are performed by the bijāh-gowa ojāpāli troupes. The number of the ojāpāli troupes may be raised up to 12 or 15. The ojās of the different troupes of the bijāh-gowa ojāpālis hold the mudrā-yantra and sing the jagara-gīta with dances and gestures along with the pālis of their respective troupes. At the end of the pūjā, the ojāpālis sing the mālsī-songs

51. N. Sarma Barua (collected): Jagara gīta (MS)
52. sebi jagara citrasenara hātata dīla/
    janiya jagara citrasena pālila //
    citrasena bante jagara narade anilā /
    sebihari jagara ye martyrata rahila //
    M. Sastri, op. cit., p. 86

N. Sarma Barua (collected), op. cit., Informant: Sri Sarat Chandra Sarma, Vyasapara, data collected on 16.1.85
and which continue up to the dawn. And at the end of the jāgara-
music, the ojāpālis offer prayer to the deity.

The rāimān-ojāpāli music had got affinities with the
biyāh-gowa-ojāpāli music originally. But now it is quite impossible
to show its different musical steps like the biyāh-gowa ojāpāli
music. Secondly, now the rāimān-gowa-ojāpāli or the bhāira
of Kamrup does not lay stress on musical aspect. On the other
hand, it lays stress on the abhinava aspect.

(b) The Sattriya ojāpāli music of the Śaṅkaradeva School:

The sattriya ojāpāli music of the school of Śaṅkaradeva
may be classified in the following way:

(1) ragadiya or ālāpa, (ii) śloka, (iii) gīta, (iv) diūhā (v) thiya-
pāten (vi) rāga-mālīta or rāga-loksana, (vii) cārona or cārana
(viii) vādya-khyālī, (ix) dhūra, (x) bānā and (xi) upadesā.

(1) Ragadiya or ālāpa: The ojāpāli of the sattriya variety
of the Śaṅkaradeva school begins the performance with the rāga-
diva or ālāpa. The ojā commences to sing the bandha-rāga with
he-re-r-te-tā-ne-nā-el-nā-the-ne-r-he-re-r-r-r-r-r-r53 While
the pālis or gāvana-bayanā start to play on khūṭītāls. There
are two varieties of rāgas: (i) bandha-rāga and (ii) melā-rāga54.

53. M.Neog, op.cit., pp.27,40
54. R.Saikia Bayan: ojāpāli Nācar Sikṣa(Rupakara, ed. vol.VII.No.3)
N.C.Goswami: Sattriya Saṃskritir Svāmaṇeśhā, p.90
(ii) **Sloka**: The second step of the Sattrīyā ojāpāli music of the Sankaradeva school is sloka. After the completion of the alapa the oja recites a few slokas beginning with "Krṣṇāya vāsudevāya devakī nandanāya ca" in the same rāga of the alapa. Along with the oja, the pālis also recite the sloka.

(iii) **Gīta**: The third step of the music of the sattrīyā ojāpāli is gīta, i.e., song. The oja sings a baragīta in bandhāraγa and the pālis repeat the jura phāki, i.e., foot of the song.

(iv) **Dīha**: Then, the dīha is sung by both the oja and the pālis. The dīha of the sattrīyā ojāpāli music has affinity with the dīha of the biyāh-gowa-ojāpāli.

(v) **Thīya pātan**: The fifth step of the sattrīyā-ojāpāli music is thīya-pātan, i.e., beginning of pada. The oja sings a few verses from the Assamese version of the Ramāyana or the Mahābhārata or the Book X of the Bhāgavata-purāṇa. Padas i.e. verses sung by both the oja and the pālis of the ojāpāli of sattrīyā variety are known as ekopāla. The first part of the pada that is sung by the oja is called thīya-pātan.

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56. M. Neog, *op.cit.*, p. 90
(vi) **Rāga-mālīta**: The sixth step of the ojapāli music of the sattriya variety of the Sāhkaradeva school is rāga-mālīta or rāga-laksana. The rāga in which the dhūra is sung by the ojapāli generally the mālīta (etiological ballad) or laksana of the rāga is sung in the same rāga.

(vii) **Cārōna or cārāna**: The cārōna or cārāna is associated with the rāga-mālīta. The cārōna connected with the mālīta of sāraṅga-rāga is given below:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{tādīrīm} & \quad \text{dīrīm} \quad \text{nādīrīm} \quad \text{dīrīm} \quad \text{nādīrīm} \quad \text{dīrīm} \\
\text{tātā-nātā-nā-tēi-tēi-tēi-nāthei-tēi} & \\
\text{dhaği-tītā-niti-tāni-tītāka} & \quad \text{jūnā-nānā-theyā-ho} \\
\text{rāmānī gaia-gamanī gaia mohini āvari} & \text{a}\quad 57
\end{align*}
\]

The ojā sets the cārōna for pālis, while the pālis repeat the foot of the song playing on khūtital and the ojā shows dance movements. It is seen that some cārāna have no relation with the rāga-mālīta. We may take an example from the kāliya-damana context. The ojā puts a question to the pālis: sei belā kāliye krṣṇara ki rūpa darsana pāichila?

— what kind of beauty did Kāli behold in the person of Lord Kṛṣṇa?

57. M. Neog, op. cit., p. 91
Pāli: jāno bāpu kahiyo /
— please tell us
Then the oja sings:

duti nayana bhariye rūpa dekhilo //
krodhehi bhujuangarāja cahiye jalera māja /
prabhura bhuwana mohana-rūpa dekhilo /
emana vinoda rūpa dekhi kālī bhailā cupa //
prabhu govindara bhūra guṇa gāla / 58

— I saw the beauty of Kṛṣṇa with my two eyes. The king of serpents (i.e. Kālī) observed Kṛṣṇa with rage.

I saw the most beautiful Kṛṣṇa
Whose beauty could fascinate the world.
Having seen the charming beauty of Kṛṣṇa
Kālī the cruel one got silent
Kālī sang the song of Govinda’s divine play.

(vii)Vādyakhiyāli: The ocarana is followed by the vādyakhiyāli.

The oja, again puts a question:
sehi samayata ki vādya bājichile ?
— What musical instruments were played at that time ?

58. M.Neog, op.cit.,p.91  
R. Saikia Bayan, op.cit.
Then, the ojās sing the vādyakhiyālī with appropriate
dance while the pālis play on the Khūṭīals: e.g.

ho ranajaya ranajaya ranajaya ranajaya

bājiche ranera dāmā lo //

dhei - dhei - thei - khiti - nādhe-ni-tāk-thum-nā //
bheurī bhūraṅga mādala mūcaṅga

dhōla mrdaṅga madhura mrdaṅga bāje /

karatāla ranajaya ranajaya ranajaya ranajaya

bājiche ranera dāmā lo //59

(ix) Dhurā: The vādyakhiyālī is followed by dhurā. The term
dhurā may come from Sanskrit dāmuva. The dhurā may be equated
with the sthīyālī. A dhurā connected with the kāliya-damana
episode is given below:

Dhurā: sobhe kanu nava ghana syāmam /

śāmanā - damana śrīkṛṣnera nāmam //

59. M. Neog, op. cit., p. 91
  R. Saikia Bayan, op. cit., p. 41
-(223)-

Pada: nava-ghanasama syama-sukumara /
tate pita bastra atikare jatiskara //
kamala locana-caru vadana sundara /
aruna adhara kanti dekhi manohara //

dhurā: Krsna behoves as dark as a new cloud.
Krsna is the controller of death.

Pada: His person is as dark as new cloud,
Saffron coloured cloth decorates his body.
His eyes like the petals of the lotus,
And his face is very charming
Loveliness of his red lips is fascinating.

(x) Bānā: Bānā comes from after dhurā. The beginning of a rāga is called bānā. 61 But this explanation seems to be only partially correct. The high pitch of a rāga is called bānā.

(xi) upadesa: The ojāpāli music of the sattrīvā variety ends with the following upadesa:

bhaja nārāyaṇa brahma saṅatana
śripati kamalā kānta 62

60. M. Neog, op. cit., pp. 91-92
R. Saikia Bayan, op. cit., p. 43
61. Informant: Sri Gandharam Bayan, Suwalkuchi, data collected on 17.8.84
62. M. Neog, op. cit., p. 92
R. Saikia Bayan, op. cit., p. 42
(c) The Sattriya ojāpali music of the Dāmodaradeva school:

The sattriya ojāpali music of the Dāmodaradeva school has as many as twelve divisions like the school of Śaṅkaradeva, e.g.

(i) Vandana, (ii)rāga, (iii)śloka, (iv) gīta, (v) dasāvatāra-varṇana, (vi) pātanika, (vii) cāraṇa, (viii) vādyakhiyāli
(ix) ghoṣa or dhura, (x) pada (xi) bana and (xii) upadesa.

(i) Vandana (obeisance): The first step of the sattriya ojāpali music of the Dāmodaradeva school is vandana. Both the ojā and the palis offer, prayer in the form of song to Govinda or Śyāma or Yadava Rāi so that they may perform their performance without any obstruction.

(ii) Rāga-diyya or alāpa: The second step of the music of sattriya ojāpali of the Dāmodaradeva school is rāga-diyya, i.e., alāpa. Like the Śaṅkaradeva school, the ojāpali of the Dāmodaradeva school performs the alāpa in the bandhā-rāga.

(iii) Śloka: Like the ojāpali of the Śaṅkaradeva school the ojāpali of the Dāmodaradeva school recites a few sanskrit ślokas.
(iv) **Gīta**: The recitation of gīta follows just after the recitation of slokas. Unlike the ojāpāli of the Śāṅkaradeva school, the ojāpāli of the Dāmodaradeva school does not sing the baragīta written by Śāṅkaradeva or Mādhavadeva but sings the songs written by the Sattrādhikāras of the sattras of the Dāmodaradeva school.

(v) **Dāsāvatāra kīrtana** i.e. singing of the song of ten incarnations of Nārāyaṇa: Tradition current particularly in the Āmīāti sattra (Āmīātiyā) and the Dāksīnāpāṭa sattra that a new oja should sing the dāsāvatāra kīrtana. For an old one it is not operative. So, the singing of the song of dāsāvatāra is not obligatory.

(vi) **Pātanikā**, i.e. beginning of a pada: Pātanikā used in the sattrīya form of ojāpāli of the school of Dāmodaradeva has similarity with the thīya-pātani current in the sattrīya-ojāpāli of the Śāṅkaradeva school. The very beginning of the padas i.e. verses are indicated through the pātanikā.

(vii) **Carana or cārōna (i.e. caraṇa)**: Carana or cārōna prevalent in the ojāpāli art form of the school of Śāṅkaradeva is mostly connected with the malita of a rāga whereas it is not connected with the malita of rāga in the Dāmodaradeva school. According to an active bearer and specialized scholar of this field, the carana is associated with the movement that are performed at high frequency.63

63. Informant: Late Maheswar Baḍa-ojā(86 years)Āmīāti Sattra, data collected on 8.11.84
(viii) Vadyakhiyāli: The vadyakhiyāli is a kind of song. According to late Maheswar Bada ojā, the tāla of the vadyakhiyāli should be very sharp. A song pertaining to the Vadyakhiyāli which is current in the Āunāṭī Sattra is given below:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bāje vādyā nikare sulalita sure} \\
vividha divya svare / \\
\text{sravane madhura āti sukhakara} \\
\text{mana madhura kare //}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
dhīn khitī khitī & tān-dhīn-dhīn-dhā \\
dhēl - khitī - khitī & dhā-dhīn-dhīn dhā \\
dhōla-khōla mādala bāje
\end{align*}
\]

(iv) Ghosā or dhura i.e. sthāyī: Ghosā or dhura i.e. sthāyī of the ojāpāli music of the Dāmodaradeva school has similarity with that of the ojāpāli music of the school of Saṅkaradeva.

(x) Pada: In fact, ghosā or dhura is connected with pada. So, pada is generally followed by ghosā or dhura. Both the oja and the pālis sing padas generally from the Assamese version of the Rāmāyana, the Mahābhārata and from the Vadha kāvyas and from the Kirtana. The rāga-mālitā or rāga-varna is sung in the midst of the singing of the padas.

64. Informant: Late Maheswar Bada-ojā (86 years) Āunāṭī Sattra
65. Informant: do
66. Informant: do
(xi) **Bāna**: According to late Maheswar Bada-oja the **bāna** is a part of a **rāga**. It is sung with the partial help of a **rāga** by the **ōjāpāli**.

(xii) **Upadesā**: Like the **ōjāpāli** music of the Sāṅkaradeva school, the **ōjāpāli** music of the school of Dāmodaradeva is not completed until and unless the **upadesa-gita** is sung.

(d) **The pāncālī form of ojāpāli (gayana-bāyana)**:

The **pāncālī** form of **ojāpāli** music (i.e., **gayana-bāyana**) may be divided into five parts; viz (i) **alāpa**, (ii) **dhūra** or **ghoṣā** (iii) **mūla-ghoṣā**, (iv) **pada** and (v) **upasāmbhara**.

(i) **Alāpa**: **Alāpa** is the beginning of **pāncālī** music. It is begun with the **guruḥāta**, i.e., the playing of **khola**. This style of playing of the **khola** at the beginning of **pāncālī** music seems to have migrated from **Hāzo**.

The **gāvana** and the **bāyana** sing the **rāga varṇa** or **rāga-lakṣaṇa** in which the **pada** is to be sung. As for example we may take the **alāpa** of **Vasanta-rāga**:

\[
\text{tā-nā-nā-nā-nā-nā} / \\
\text{tā-nā, nā-nā, nā - nā} / / \\
\]

67. **Informant**: Late Maheswar Bada-oja, Auniati Sattra data collected on 8.11.84

68. **Informant**: Sri Sri Visnuchandra deva Goswami Sattrādhikara Auniati Sattra, data collected on 8.11.84

69. **Informant**: do on 8.11.84


(ii) Dhūra or ghosā: The pālis repeat the dhūra after every caraṇa of a pada. 71

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70. Informant: Late Makeswar Ba-ōja, Auniati Sattra data collected on 8.11.85

71. Informant: Sri Sri Visnucandradeva Goswami Sattrādhikārā, Auniati Sattra, data collected on 8.11.85
(iii) **Mūlaghosa** : Although the active bearers of the art form of *pañcāli* try to differentiate the *ghosa* from the *mūlaghosa*, nevertheless there is no subtle difference between the two. As for example we may cite an illustration of the *ghosa* or *dhurā*:

```
namo nitya niraṇjana deva saṅatane //
nirākāra nirvikāra karāṇa tārana //72
```

These couple of lines is repeated by the pālis after every carāṇa of a pada. It is the *sthāyī* and it works as the dhurā or the *ghosa*. Again, this *sthāyī* is also called the mūla *ghosa*.

(iv) **Pada** : The style of pada bears similarity with the pada of the sattriya ojāpālis both of the Śaṅkaradeva school and the school of Dāmodaradeva. Sometimes, the performers of *pañcāli* art form sing the Assamese version of the dasavatāra-varanana of Jayadeva of Bengal. It indicates that the mangalacarana-sloka or vandana is recited along with the pada. So, it may be guessed that the mangalacarana or vandana is a part of the pada.

(v) **Upasamhāra** : The upasamhāra is a part of the art form of *pañcāli*. At the end of the performance of *pañcāli* art form the

72. Informant : Sri, Sri Vignacandradeva Goswami, Sattrādhiṣṭha, Aunigti Sattra, data collected on 8.11.85
73. Informant : do
performers recite like the alāna, e.g.

tā - nā - nā - tā - nā - nā /
nā - tā - tā - nā - tā - nā //74

From the thematic point of view pāñcarī-ojāpāli
music may be divided into five categories, e.g.

(i) nāma maṅgala, (ii) ghosā maṅgala, (iii) rāsa-maṅgala,
(iv) haramohana -maṅgala and (v) Śiva maṅgala. 75

(i) The nāma maṅgala narrates the supremacy of the chanting
of the nāmas of Vāsudeva or Govinda or Śyāmarāi.

(iii) The ghosā-maṅgala emphasises the act of repetition of
the ghosā or dhura or sthāyi.

(iii) The rāsa-maṅgala narrates the glory of the rāsa of Rādhā
and Kṛṣṇa.

(iv) The haramohana-maṅgala declares the act of Siva's fascina-
tion due to Viṣṇu's magical power (i.e. Haramohana).

(v) The Śiva maṅgala declares the glory of Lord Śiva. 76

The dulādi form of ojāpāli:

The dulādi form of ojāpāli music may be classified into
a few categories, such as:

74. Informant: Sri Sri Viṣṇucandradeva Goswami, Satrādhikāra
Āumiāti Sattra, data collected on 8.11.84

75. Informant: do

76. Informant: do
(i) Alapa : Like other forms of ojapali the duladul form of ojapali music also begin with alapa, such as:

ha - ta , na - na , na - na /
ri - ri - ri - ri - ri //78

(ii) Vandana or mangalacarana : The vandana or mangalacarana commences with the singing of the dasavatara-varnana of Jaydeva. 79

(iii) Raga : The ojapali begins to the very raga in which the pada is to be sung. 80

(iv) Raga-malita : The singing of raga-malita or raga-varna or raga-laksha is started just after the introduction of the raga. The ojapali sings the raga-malita of that raga in which the pada is to be sung. 81

(v) Dhura or ghosa or sthayi : Then comes the dhura or ghosa or sthayi. Like other forms of the ojapali, the palis repeat the dhura after every caraṇa of a pada. 82

77. Informant : Late Maheswar Bada-oja, data collected on 8.11.84
78. Informant : do
79. Informant : do
80. Informant : do
81. Informant : do
82. Informant : do
(v) *Pada*: The *pada duladī* form or *ojāpāli* has got similarity with other form of *ojāpāli.*

(vii) *Upasamhāra*: It is the last step of the *duladī-ojāpāli* music.

(e) **The Sukāṇī ojāpāli music:**

From the thematic point of view the *sukāṇī ojāpāli* music may be categorized into two broad divisions, such as (a) *pūjār-gītas,* i.e. songs related directly to the worship of the snake goddess Manasā and (b) the *padmā-purāṇa-gītas,* i.e. songs related to the glory of the snake deity Manasā which are based on the *padmā-purāṇa* of Sukavi Narayana Deva.

(a) *Pūjār-gītas*: It has already been mentioned that the *pūjār-gītas* both of the *bīyāh-gowā* variety and the *sukāṇī* form of *ojāpāli* sing the *pūjār-gītas* in the sitting position. After singing of *ālapa* the *ojāpāli* sings the *jāgāni* i.e., waking of all gods and goddesses and the *mandapa* and so on. The next step of the *pūjār-gīta* is the *tālā aru pātār janam,* i.e. singing of etiological ballads of cymbals and jute. It is followed by *Ganēśa-vandana* or the *dāsa-vartar-vandana* or by goddess *Sarasvati-vandana* or by *Rāma-vandana* or so on. The next step is the *arati-patana* or the etiological ballad regarding the creation of the universe. It is followed by the singing of the *mandapa-sthāpanā,* i.e. setting up an altar for the worship of the snake goddess-

83. Informant; Late Maheswar Bada-ojā, Amlātī Sattra, data collected on 8.11.84

84. Informant: do
Manasa. 85 The next step is the Bandubiraciní vandana, i.e., singing of the glory of goddess Bandubiraciní. It is followed by the singing of etiological ballads regarding the gods and goddesses and the etiological ballads about the ghata (pot) and kumara, i.e. kumbhakara or potter. The next step of the pujar-gita is the singing of devi-avahana, i.e. the invocation of the goddess Manasa. 86 It is followed by mandapata bigraha sthapana, i.e., the singing of installation of the bigraha of goddess on the altar. The other steps of the pujar-gitas are the singing of devira-adhivasa i.e., singing of ceremonial songs on the eve of the worship of goddess Manasa and the mandapa jaganí, i.e., singing of the wakening songs of the altar. 87

The others steps of the pujar-gitas are ghatat pani-tola gita, i.e., singing of songs in connection with the ceremonial water-bringing from a river or a pond to bathe the goddess Manasa; mandapa sudhi karana, i.e. songs to purify the mandapa of the goddess Manasa and so on. 88

From the musical point of view the Sukmani ojapali music can be categorized in the following ways: 89

(i) alapa (ii) vandana (iii) alapa (iv) dhá (v) pada and (vi) Upasamhara.

85. Informant: Sri Lalit Chandra Nath ojá, Sipajhar, Darrang data collected on 15.9.84
86. Informant: do
87. Informant: do
88. Informant: do
89. Informant: Sri Nareswar Sarma Barua, Bipila, data collected on 18.9.84
(i) Ālāpa: Like the biyā-h-gōvā-ojāpāli music the first step of the sukhnāmi ojāpāli music is the Ālāpa. Although the style of singing of the Ālāpa of both the forms are not the same nevertheless the theme of the Ālāpa of both the art forms is the same. Like the biyā-h-gōvā-ojāpāli music the sukhnāmi ojāpāli music also begins with the svara-sādhana or Ālāpa which commences with such syllables as ha, ta, na, ri(r), ritā(rta).  

(ii) Vandana: The next step of the sukhnāmi ojāpāli music is vandana or maṅgalāgarana. It begins with the syllables ha, ta, na, ri(r) and ritā(rta). There are many vandana-gītas, such as Gaṇesā, Daśāvatara, Anādi, Rāma, Śiva, Daśādikāpāla, Aṣṭanāga, Guru, Paṃdāvatī, Viṣṇu, Manuṣa, Bhavānī, Candikā or Candī, Durgā, Kāli, Śītalā, Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, Jagaddhātri, and so on. In the musical performance the ojāpāli recites only one vandana-gīta with appropriate tune and tālas.

(iii) Ālāpa: At the end of the vandana-gīta the ojāpāli again begins the Ālāpa with the syllables: ha, ta, na, ri(r) and ritā(rta) for a while and then shifts to the next step.  

(iv) Dīhā or sthāyī: Although the term of sthāyī is not current amongst the performers of the ojāpāli institution,

90. N.C. Sarma: Asamar Loka Sanskriti, p. 122
91. Ibid.
92. Ibid.
the term may be taken as a synonym of the word diha. Every pada is sung along with the diha. The style of singing of the diha and the pada are same both in the biyah-gowa-ojāpāli and the sattriya ojāpāli and the sukāṇi ojāpālis of Kamrup.

(v) Pada: The diha is followed by the pada. Although the word pada denotes a couple of rhymes or lines nevertheless the term pada suggests a chapter containing ten to fifteen caraṇas in respect of all the different forms of ojāpāli. The term ekhān-pada or ekhan pada i.e. one pada suggests the following type of verses:

Dihā: Uth kamalamūlī ahe priyā /  
a kāta nīdrā yāna sukhe //

Pada: tomāra āmāra bidāya ,  
bisemora prāna vāva  
āmi calo yamara nagare /  
utha bāniyāra jhī ,  
nīdrā sukhe kāra ki  
purūhitaka anīyo sattvare //
tumi āmi eka sānge ,  
majucata āchilo rāṅge ,  
kona deve dāsīlā najāni /  
keṇā āṅgulīta bīse ,  
najānīlo khālā kise ,
āmi calo yamara sadani //
khār-gāthi mana pālla biše,
a najānilo khāilā kise,
sei baisa gagana udbhāi /
kalaphulamān pālla biše,
a najānilo khāilā kise,
sei baisa gagana udbhāi //
āthumāna pālla biše e,
najānilo khāilā kise e,
cari yaya āmara parāna /
ūrumāna pālla biše e,
ai rāma najānilo khāilā kise e
sei baisa agani samāna //
nabhumāna pālla biše e,
ai rāma najānilo khāilā kise e,
yāi baisa gagana udbhāi /
peṭamāna pālla biše e ,
ai rāma najānilo khāilā kise e ,
yāi baisa gagana udbhāi //
bukumāna pālla biše e ,
ai rāma najānilo khāilā kise e ,
sei baisa gagana udbhāi /
gala mana pālla biše e
ai rāma najānilo khāllā kise e
yāi bisa gagana udbhāī //
kaṇamāna pālā bise e,
ai rāma yāi bisa dasō disā ,
kālakūta bisa dasōdisē yāi /
mūramāna pālā bise e ,
sarvāngē cāndilā bise e,
yāi bisa gagana udbhāī //
kesamāna pālā bise e ,
ai rāma najānilo khāllā kise e,
kāla kūta bisa dasōdisē yāya /
bise birañciīā gāo ,
āchāre bāta pāō ,
Lakahāi somāre hari hara //
pṛāna tejīlā lakhibder ,
mukhe nāhi māta bola ,
dhali pare pālengīra upara /
nārāyana deve kaya
sukavi vallabbhe haya
Kalimāga bhāileka antara //93

Diha: O lotus-faced beloved! awake
For how long are you going to sleep happily?

Pada: The moment of separation of you and me is impending,
I am extremely distressed due to the venom,
I am setting off to the city of Yama.
O merchant’s daughter (i.e. Beula) awake
why are you sleeping happily?
Fetch the priest immediately.
You and I are sleeping in the fortified building happily
But I do not know the god
who did bite me?
The little finger of my left leg is covered by venom,
I do not know who bites me?
I am going to the city of Yama
The venom is advancing up to the ankle,
I do not know who bites me?
That venom is advancing rapidly.
The venom is advancing up to the calf of the leg,
I do not know who bites me?
The venom is ascending swiftly,
The venom is reaching my knee
I do not know who bites me?
My life is at the point of living my body.
The venom is catching my thigh
But I do not know who bites me?
The venom is going up swiftly.
The venom is reaching my navel,
But I donot know who bites me?
The venom is only going upwards swiftly.
The venom is reaching my belly
I do not know who bites me?
The venom is only advancing swiftly.
The venom is getting my chest,
But I donot know who bites me?
That venom is only rising upwards,
The venom is catching my throat
But I do not know who bites me?
It is rising up swiftly.

The venom is reaching my ears,
But I donot know who bites me?
The kālakūta venom spreads in all directions.

The venom is reaching the head of Lakhāi,
It covers his whole body.
The venom is still coming up.
The venom is rising up to the hair,
But I donot know who bites me,
The kālakūta venom spreads in all directions
The venom spreads over the person of Lakhāi,
And he is tossing his hands and feet
out of severe pain.
He recollects the names of Hari and Hara.
Lakhāi breathes his last
His mouth becomes speechless,
He droops on the bed.

Poet Nārāyanadeva sayeth:

"Kālināga leaves the place immediately".

The ojā sets first and the first half of the second line and the pālis sing the second half of the second line along with the diha.

(vi) Upasamhāra: The next step of the sukhāni ojāpāli music is upasamhāra. Both the ojā and the pālis give fare well to the snake goddess Manasa by singing the following song from the Padmā-purāṇa of Sukavi Nārāyanadeva, e.g.

dīha:

a barhāmini mai aparādha khemā kara more bāhare padumāi /

Pada:

aparādha khemā kari cali yowā bīshari

sarva doṣa kara paritrāṇa /

śatadosa khemā kari cali yowā bīshari

tuwa pāwe pasilo sāraṇa //

māriyāra yata doṣa brāhmaṇara yata doṣa

khemā kara āi bīshari
sabhāsadar yata doṣa khamā karā padomāi

gayānara sātadosa khamā karā padumāi, etc.

diha : O mother Brahmani
Forgive all my omissions and commissions.

Pada : O Bishahari
Kindly go to your permanent abode
By forgiving all faults of ours.
We take shelter on your feet.
Kindly forgive our hundreds of errors that may have occurred in our worship.
Kindly forgive all the faults of the worshipper of the māraipūja
And kindly excuse all the defects of the priest
And kindly forgive the errors of the singers.

According to some active bearers of the suknāṇi ojāpāli the singing of juna is a part of the suknāṇi ojāpāli music. But it seems to be partially correct. The singing of juna is essential in the last day of the māraipūja, i.e. bhardaka particularly in the dead of night and which is associated with the deodhani nāc. But the suknāṇi ojāpāli perfor-

93(a) By courtesy of Dr N.C. Sarma, Gauhati University
mance can be held without the deodhani rāc. Since, the singing of junā is primarily associated with the deodhani rāc, the act of singing of junā song is not essential. So, it would be wrong if we say that the singing of junā is an essential part in the suknāi ojāpālī music. A junā-song is given below for specimen:

```
hai lagari māchokeli yāo /
khāleito kakalat bāndhi lao //
a jākheito narawe khāleito narawe 
 a kīne darkīnā māche ai lagari //
a. sonkāle bāth khāi āi tai
   yagei yā /

a dehī mai nāyāo yā //

a negeli kīyā habo /
a puwelī biyā habo //
a āi tai yagei yā // 94
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(The womenfolk call other womenfolk to go for fishing):

0 friends, come, we now go for fishing,
keep tight the basket round your waist

The fishes cannot keep in the jākai (a kind of bamboo scoop used for catching fish) and in the khālai (a kind of bamboo basket used for keeping fishes)

94. Informant: Sri Prafulla Nath, oja Garukhuti, Darrang
data collected on 3.10.84
0 my friend, what kind these darkina fishes are.  
0 my little girl, take your meal early and go.  
But my friend I will never go.  
But it cannot be, you must go.  
At the morning your marriage would be.  
So, 0 my friend, you should go.

The junā song is not based on the Padmā-purāṇa, however, it is transmitted orally. It is never sung by the ojā. The pālis sing the junā song without having the aid of any musical instrument. They perform dramatical performances along with the singing of the junā song.

It has already been mentioned that the suknāni ojāpāli music is heavily influenced by the biyāh-gowā-ojāpāli music particularly in the district of Darrang. So, the suknāni ojāpāli music of Darrang seems to be nearer to the classical music although the folk substructure of the art form may not be denied. But the suknāni ojāpāli music of the old district of Kamrup is not nearer to the classical music.

The bisaharir-gāna-gowā-ojāpāli current in Kamākhyā, Bamunswalkuchi, Geruwa and so on has no subtle musical steps as in the biyāh-gowā-ojāpāli music. In the same way the art form of Padda-purāṇar gāna does not contain musical steps akin to those of the biyāh-gīvā-ojāpāli or the sattrīya form of ojāpāli.
Märe-gañ gowa ojāpāli music:

From thematic point of view the music of märe-gañ gowa ojāpāli may be classified into the following:

(i) bahānī srsti (creation of the universe)
(ii) tāl-pāṭār janam (singing of the etiological ballads regarding the tālā (cymbal) and pāṭ (jute)),
(iii) guwājanam (creation of betel nut),
(iv) tāṭirjanam (creation of weaver),
(v) malirjanam (creation of gardener),
(vi) kamarjanam (creation of black-smith),
(vii) sōlājanam i.e. kuhilājanam (creation of cork-tree),
(viii) māju kāmāni (creation of the māju, a kind of boat made from banana or from kuhilā plants),
(ix) māju barañi (welcoming the māju).

All these songs are sung in the sitting position. Then they begin to sing uthani-srasti, i.e. songs relating to the creation of the universe in the standing position. Here both the ojā and the pālis sing the etiological ballads regarding Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Maheśvara and so on. These are followed by the singing of Sāti's self-immolation and the re-birth of Sāti as Durgā. Then, they sing the following songs: e.g.

(i) Śīvar mālañcā kāmāni (creation of Śiva's garden)
(ii) Śīva Durgā gandharva biyāh (companionate marriage of Śiva and Durgā).
Hemarsi's (father of Durga) suspicion of his daughter Durga and arrangements of different ordeals to test her chastity, such as:

(i) jui parīkkha (parīksā), i.e., fire ordeal,
(ii) khur parīkkha, i.e. blade ordeal,
(iii) guwa parīkkha, i.e. betel-nut ordeal,
(iv) jala parīkkha, i.e. water ordeal,
(v) ghat parīkkha, i.e. pot ordeal,
(vi) ghar parīkkha, i.e. house ordeal,
(vii) sūtā parīkkha, i.e. thread ordeal,
and (viii) tula parīkkha, i.e. cotton ordeal

At the end of the singing of Durga's ordeals, they begin to sing the song of bāṣi kāmāni, i.e. song relating to the origin of the flute. It is followed by the following, e.g.

(i) paddār janna, i.e. birth of goddess Pādmā,
(ii) Ganesar janna, i.e. birth of Ganesā,
(iii) airān bāc, i.e. living in the forest,
(iv) Kapilī mathan, i.e. churning of Kapilī (a cow)
(v) sāgar mathan, i.e. churning of sea,
(vi) gosāi dak, i.e., swooning of Siva for taking the Kalakūta venom,
(vii) Candor janama, i.e., birth of Candō,
(viii) Candor banij, i.e., Candō's trade,
(ix) Lakhinderar janma, i.e. birth of Lakhinder,

(x) mera kamāni, i.e. construction of the fortified building,

(xi) chāyādak, i.e., indication of the snake bite,

(xii) Lakhinderar biyā, i.e. marriage of Lakhinder,

(xiii) sarpa dāmsānat Lakhinderar maran, i.e. Lakhinda’s death due to snake-bite,

(xiv) bhel-bhatiyani, i.e., Beulā’s journey to the devaloka through a raft along with the dead body of her husband.

(xv) Lakhinderar punar jīvan lābh, i.e. Lakhinda’s regaining of life.

(xvi) Cândor-paddāpūjā, i.e., Cāndo’s worship of goddess Paddā (Paddā).

From the musical point of view the mare-gān gowā-ojāpāli music may be divided into the following sections, viz.

(i) Vandana, (ii) singing of etiological ballads regarding the different materials necessary for the worship of the snake goddess Paddā, (iii) dīhā, (iv) pada, (v) jumā and (vi) samāpati

(i) Vandana: The mare-gān-gowā-ojāpāli music begins with a vandana of Sarasatī (i.e. Sarasvatī), e.g.

95. Informant: Sri Praneswar Rabha, Daranggiri, data collected on 21.10.93
The song is to be sung by adoring mother Sarasvati,
I have no other alternative except goddess Sarasvati.
And whose husband is Govinda who pleases the three worlds and is
the Sun of the Universe.

(ii) Malita: The next step is the singing of some etiological
ballads regarding the different materials necessary for Padmā's
worship.

(iii) Diha: The third step of the music of māre-gān-gowā-ojāpāli
is diha which has similarity with that of the suknāni-ojāpāli
music.

(iv) Pada: Diha is followed by pada. The form and content of
the diha of the suknāni-ojāpāli music have got many similari-
ties with that of the art form of māre-gān-gowā-ojāpāli.

96. Informant: Sri Praneswar Rabha, Daranggiri,
data collected on 21.10.83
Samapati: The samapati is indicated by the singing of one or two panegyrics.

The tradition of singing of the juna-song is also current in mare-gan-gowa-ojapali music. The term kari is a synonym of the term juna which is prevalent among the pati Rabbas of both the South and North Goalpara. B. Datta is of opinion that the juna is a kind of light and humorous song which has no direct relation with the main story. The only purpose of the juna-song with special reference to mare-gan is to cater to the audience with the comic elements in the midst of tragic events of Beula and Lakhibinder.97 But it is also correct that the singing of juna-song is not obligatory as the ojapali troupe cannot sing a juna or a kari-song at their will. At the request of both the male and female audience the ojapali may generally sing a juna-song at midnight. Or the ojapali may sing a juna-song by getting the approval of the audience of both the sexes. Otherwise, the female audience may leave the performance.98

The theme of the juna-song very often seems to be allegorical. The generative organs of both man and woman and their functions have been narrated with the help of symbols like the Khakchi fish (symbol of the vagina) and the garefish (symbol of the penis).

98. Informant: Sri Praneswar Rabha, Daranggiri data collected on 21.10.83
A juna or kari song currently traditionally among the ojapali circle of mare-gan-gowa-ojapali is given below as a specimen:

**dihā:** cal yakhini māchak yāng alāi bilāi
  
cal yakhini māchak yāng /

hare hare rām rām hare rām rām a rām /

**Pada:** ahe aie ahe bāi māch mārbā yāng /

kalir parāi kichu nai sundā bāte khāing //

obāwā kande tohā tohā
bhāṅgāya dilung tāṅga /

bhitarate rāndhā bārā bāwā bāigel rāṅgā //

māch mārbā yāi yakhini lāmpētā bilat /

lāl bilāl tāmul khāi rājā bāhmā silat //

lag dharā dhari kari māch mārbā yāi /

kāndalare tāmul pān bakharā kari khāi //

māch māritē māch māritē uthil kānduli /

jākhar konat dūlāi thalung hāri māduli //

amar desar kathā nahāi bhatāi desar kathā /

khākoḥi māche gili thay gare māchār māthā //**99**

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99. **Informant:** Sri Praneswar Rabha, Daranggiri

*Data collected on 21.10.83*
dibā: O Yakhñī (a spirit, a humorous term of address) let us go for fishing:
Pada: O mother, o sister, let us go for fishing,
we had no curry since yesterday,
we had to eat just rice.
The children are weeping,
The children became red with heat because cooking had to be done in the same room.
The yakhni has gone for fishing at the Lāmpetā pond
She reddens her mouth chewing betelnut sitting on
the rājābāhā rock.
They go in a body to catch fish,
They cut and chew betel-nut very frequently,
While fishing they caught a kānduli fish.
They kept it in a the corner of the jākai.
This tale is not of our locality
It has come from the westernland.
The khākohi fish swallows the head of the gare-fish.
The junā-song is sung with the aid of the instrument of tāla. And like the sukhāni ojāpāli the singing of junā-song in māra-gan-gowā-ajāpāli is associated with abhinaya.