

# Assamological evidences in Assamese folk songs

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## Abstract

Assamology means the theoretical discussions of language, literature, culture, polity, economy, society, history and allied fields in the context of Assam. How the discussions on these aspects takes place in the context of Assam is the inherent study in Assamology. It covers the study of various dimensions ranging from ancient lithography to modern poetry, from Satriya Dance-Music to folk tales, from pre-historical architecture to philosophy and religion. Folk literatures are the reflection of revolutionary experiences and the knowledge gained by common humans. It is not a creation of a single individual, but is a collective creation that takes place through ages. The evidences of Assamological studies are found in Assamese folk literatures, handwritten ancient texts, and historical documentation. By studying Assamese folk literatures, we get the glimpses of the then prevalent political, social, economic, cultural, and lingual situation. This paper titled " Assamological evidences in Assamese folk songs" has been prepared with a view to discuss the then contemporary life and psyche of Assamese people.

**Key Word :** Assamology, Folksong.

## Objectives of the study

The objectives of the paper are mentioned below

- To discuss how Assamese folk songs express historical evidences in the context of Assamology
- To discuss how Assamese folk songs express political evidences in the context of Assamology
- To discuss how Assamese folk songs express cultural evidences in the context of Assamology
- To discuss how Assamese folk songs express economic evidences in the context of Assamology.
- To discuss how Assamese folk songs express social evidences in the context of Assamology.

## Scope of the study

The scope of the study is very limited. This paper has attempted to study only the social, political, economic, cultural, and historical aspects expressed in the context of Assamese folk songs.

## Assamological evidences in Assamese folk songs

### 1.1 Historical Evidences

In Assamese folk songs, In them various historical stories or informative facts are reflected. They also depict various historical incidences namely about Ahom Kingdom, Annexation by the British, China War, Burmese Attack etc. How Assamological historical evidences are found in Assamese folk songs are analysed and discussed below with references -

- The adverse impact of the economic exploitation of Assamese people by the British are reflected in folk songs. Piyali Pukhan was hanged in 1830. In 1858 the British also hanged Mani Ram Dewan deceitfully at Jorhat. Then onwards oppression and exploitation by the British intensified with the increase of land revenue rates. The mentioned folk song depicts and reflects these very clearly.

Bhir Khai Bagari                      Lagil o' Maniram  
Bhir Khai Bagari Lagil

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- Some Assamese folk songs also describe how Joymoti Konwari was punished for 15 days and eventually killed by Lora Roja's men, and also how Gadadhar Singh hid and roamed to escape from him. During his exile, Gadadhar Singh at a place called Chow Dhowkhuwa on the bank of river Diroi cleverly escaped from being captured by Lora Roja's men. On being enquired the whereabouts of Godapani, which Joymoti refused, she was dragged and beaten –

AAi Hunmoti                      Mahanar Jiyarui  
Bhadaram Baperar Nam

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- The exploitative nature of British colonialism resulted in harassment of common Assamese masses across the region which led to resentment among the local people. There were various revolts as a result of it. The protest against this type of exploitation finds voice in folk songs too. –

Sou Je Maniram                      Sau Je Khudiram  
Ase Bimanat Roi

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## 1.2 Cultural Evidences

Various cultural evidences are also found in Assamese folk songs. References to Assamese attires, ornaments, musical instruments, food habits, rituals, festivals etc are found in folk songs.

How Assamological cultural evidences are found in Assamese folk songs are analysed and discussed below with references -

- Male attires, ornaments, social customs and traditions are depicted beautifully in folk songs-

Sargadeo Ulale                      Batchawrar Mukhaloi

Duliai Patile Dola.

Through this Bihu song, it can be known that males also used to wear Gumcheng'or Sola at that time along with bodily ornaments. The female dancers' ornaments like Gaamxaaru, Lokapar, Golpota-Biri, Powalmoni etc were of importance. In Bihu songs, numerous references to female ornaments are made

Satore Suwani            Satore Game Kharu  
Konkalar Suwani Riha .

In this Bihu song, what ornaments and where they are worn by female dancers is depicted.

- The references of the tradition of Bohag Bihu and the musical instruments used during its celebration are also found in Assamese folk songs. The celebration of Bohag Bihu involves dancing, singing and various other joyful activities. This Bihu starts from the last day of Chath month of Assamese calendar and continues for seven days with nomenclatures for each day like Goru Bihu, Maanuh Bihu, Goshai Bihu, Sera Bihu etc.

In the day of Goru Bihu, blessings are sought from elders and it is considered an auspicious custom.

The reflection of these customs are beautifully illustrated in Bihu songs –

Satote Sakari            Bohagat Bagari  
Zethat Aamona Dhan.  
Garu Bihur Dina        Loba Arkhibad  
Tehe Paba Boikunthat Sthan

The Bihu songs mentions Dhol, Pepa, Gogona, Hutuli, Baahi, Taal and other varieties of musical instruments –

Kamore Samayat        Ki Penpa Bajuwa  
Penpare Tihiti Mat.

### 1.3 Economic Evidences

Like cultural and historical evidences, various economic evidences are also found in Assamese folk songs. How Assamological cultural evidences are found in Assamese folk songs are analysed and discussed below with references -

Assam is an agrarian state. How tea plantation is a source of livelihood for a large number of people is also mentioned in Assamese folk songs. Tea plantation was started by the British. In 1899 'Assam Tea Company' was formed and its office was established in Nazira. According to Mill's Report, there were three other famous tea estates other than that of the company's. How tea plantation brought about economic and social changes are reflected in Bihu songs-

Salguri Bagicha        Anani Banani  
Tatu Nabahile Mon  
Samular Tantsal        Sonapur Nagarkhan

Tatehe Bahile Mon.

In Bihu songs, the then prevalent economic scenario in the context of employment in government and tea estates are also reflected in Bihu songs. –

Sarkari Kamoloi      Ulalu Lahori

Tumar Mukhale Sai.

#### 1.4 Political Evidences

In Assamese folk songs, various Assamological political evidences are also found. The exploitative administration by the British, their self centered politics, and deceptive diplomacy etc are well illustrated-

Sivagar Sukabo      Afukani Ulabo

Afingat Patibo Juka.

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#### 1.5 Social Evidences

The ill aspects of Assamese society like lack of morality, communalism as well as the factors that keep the Assamese society united are also depicted in Assamese folk songs. How Assamological cultural evidences are found in Assamese folk songs are analysed and discussed below with references -

Their is a very close relationship of Assamese rural people with nature. In folk songs of Goalpara region, how bamboo trees plays an important role in the social life of the people of that region is depicted .The social life reflected in the Assamese folk songs shows agriculture as the primary source of livelihood. –

Basibar Jodi      Chaikha Chabi

Haler Muthi Dhor Dhakhire.

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Social customs and traditions, superstitions etc are also expressed in Assamese folk songs. Among the rural women, an occasion called Apeshwari Sobha is celebrated. When for unknown reasons, children suffer from diseases or there is delay in the onset of puberty among young girls, it is superstitiously regarded as the curse of Apeshwari. Then to please Apeshwari, she is worshipped and offered flowers. –

Phulare Akhone      Phulare Bhakhane

Rabhatal Amul Mulai

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#### 2.0 The scope of future studies

At the conclusion of this paper titled 'Assamological evidences in Assamese folk songs', it can be said that there are plenty of scopes for further studies in Assamological evidences in Assamese folk literature. Assamese folk literature is composite of very rich elements, and Assamese folk songs holds a very prominent place in adding to its richness. There are numerous possibilities of conducting research on the changes and development in contemporary Assamese society with that of the past in the context of

social, political and cultural aspects that are reflected in the folk songs. There are not much resources available on the internet on this subject, though fragments of information regarding the geographical, political, cultural context of Assam are found, but they are not sufficient. If with the use of unicode, the Assamological evidences in folk songs are uploaded comprehensively on the internet, then this new age platform can provide Assam a new identity and its due place at the global level. Therefore it can be said that further studies on this paper titled 'Assamological evidences in Assamese folk songs' has not only a lot of scope but has significant necessities too.

### 3.0 Conclusion

From this research paper titled 'Assamological evidences in Assamese folk songs', it can be derived that –

- Various Assamological evidences pertaining to the then prevalent time are found in Assamese folk songs.
- These folk songs covers political, social, economic, cultural, linguistic dimensions.
- A holistic view of the then prevalent time in Assam encompassing various aspects can be formed by the study of Assamological evidences reflected Assamese folk songs.

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### Thesis

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