

Project on :

Dresses and Ornaments

Used in Ankiya Nat

(Ankiya Bhaona)

in Assam

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1.1. Introduction:

Ankiya-nat means one-act drama. Ankiya-nat are the true index of Sri Sri Sankardeva and Madhabdeva. Enactment of ankiya nat or plays authored by Srīmanta Sankardeva and Madhabdeva is called 'Bhaona'. Ankiya bhaona are many evident in the content of the play, dialogues, costumes, ornaments, entry and foot-steps of the characters. The costumes and the ornaments constitute the 'Alankara' of the play. Here, I will discuss only a few important costumes and ornaments used in ankiya-nat or bhaona.

Mahapurushī Sankardeva laid the foundation of asamese society by perfectly bringing the local artifacts and culture in to the spiritual path of vaishnavism.



Sutraadhara in Ankiya-nat

2.1.

Costumes or dresses of Sutradhara and Grayan-bayan:

An important costume in the arkiya nat is the headgear which is called Pag or paguri in Assamese. Different characteres types of headgears are worn by different characters. The most important character and compere, Sutradhara wears a Sutradhara pag popularly known as Moglai pag though it is a wrong name. Actually it should be called Koshapatiya pag as the pag is prepared by tying the cloth in a Kosha.

Sometimes the Sutradhara pag is embellished by adding laces on the borders. This lace is similar to that of cheleng.

The headgear of Gayan-bayan is different from the headgear of Sutradhara. The gayan-bayan wear khekerupatiya pag or Gosai-pag as headgears.

Krishna and the royal characters do not wear headgears. They wear crowns made of bamboo sticks and cane fibre. But over time, the crowns started to be made of paper pulp covered by cloth, which is embellished by chumki and lace.

The Sutra wears a loose jacketed vest on the upper part of the body. This jacketed vest is popularly known as 'jalikota chola' as there is a netting added and sewn above the open-chest cloth vest. Other characters also wear jackets in ankiya-nat or bhaona.

The ghuri or lahanga worn by the sutradhara is a type of petticoat that reaches upto the ankles. A waist-band called karadhani used to be put on by the sutradhara around the waist. This kept his jalikota chola and ghuri or lahanga together. But, it is costly. So, alternatively a cloth waist-band called Tangali is used. Above all these sutradhara hangs two long pieces of cloths from his two shoulders down to knee, taken through under the karadhani or Tangali.

The gayan-bayan do not wear dresses like the sutradhara. They wear chapkon, reaching upto knees, a cheleng over that, simple dhuti and a gosai pag as headgear.



Lord Krishna

2.2. Costumes of Krishna and the Kings:

The costumes of lord Krishna in ankiya nat is noteworthy. Krishna wears yellow dhuti which is called bhuni in Satriya jargon. The gopa boys also wear yellow bhuni. The royal characters wear chaptom and hang a decorated piece called 'Nimai' from the neck in both front and back.

Some of the characters wear a flowing cloth on their back. It is called pithiya. Now-a-days the pithiya of lord Krishna is sought to be differentiated from other pithiyas by writing an 'Om' on it.

The characters of deers like Vishwamitra and Urashurama wear Ochre coloured clothes in ankiya

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A sage in Ankiya-nat



Female character in Ankiya-nat

Shaona. Both of them wear garlands of 'Pudraksha' beads around neck as well as the wrists.

2.3. Costumes of the female characters:

The female characters wear mekhela and riha if they were royal characters. Otherwise they wear ghurci, chador and kurmani or kacholi if they are general characters. The married characters cover their heads with veil called 'Orani'. The hair tied to a knot called 'Khopa'.

3.0. Ornaments used in ankiya-nat:

Regarding ornaments, the Sutradhara wears earrings known as kanphuti or lokapara in his ears.

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Ornaments used in Ankiya-nat



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Ornaments used in Ankiya-nat

He hangs motamoni, Dugdugi etc. from his neck. He wears bracelets called Mota gamkharu in his wrists. Some bracelets have the motif or magari. He also wears nupur that makes rattling sound on his legs. In the earlier days he used to wear a silver waist-band called karadhani around the waist. The female characters wear baju in the arms, gold, bracelets in the wrist, earrings in the ears, necklace like golpota in neck, gold rings in the fingers and gold tapering called 'jethi' on the forehead etc.

4.0 Conclusion:

Ankiya - nat or bhaona is popularly known for its unique dresses, ornaments used in it. Ankiya - nat reflects our vaishnava tradition and our assamese culture.



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