

A Musicological Exploration of Assamese Wedding Songs: 'Biyä-Näm'

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Introduction

It is said that marriages are made in heaven and celebrated on earth. The marriage or the wedding ceremony is considered to be a major event in human life and society. Man and woman represent the two halves of the divine body. It is the wedding ceremony that offers social sanction to their conjugal life. In India, the Vedic scriptures accorded sanction to various festivities and postulated eight kinds of marriage to be performed with ceremonial rites. These are:

1. The Brahma
2. The Daiva
3. The Ärya
4. The Prajäpatya
5. The Asüra
6. The Gandharva
7. The Räkshasa, and
8. The Paishäsa

Among these eight kinds, the first four i.e. the Brahma, the Daiva, the Ärya and the Prajäpatya are religiously acceptable. In other words these four kinds are to be solemnized with ceremonial rites. What is more, the Brahma, the Daiva, and the prajäpatya are purely meant for the Brahmins, the Prajäpatya is common for all. The rests are non-religious kinds of wedding system

The Assamese Wedding Songs: 'Biyä Näm'

In a Vedic wedding ceremony, both the bride and the bridegroom take oath for the practice of self-restraint, to work together for the welfare of the family and to help each other to attain spiritual peace. The procedure of solemnizing rites and rituals differ from society to society but the basic aim of it is the same, i.e. to give social sanction to conjugal life. Process and procedure of celebrating the ceremony also differs in diverse societies. Centering round the ceremony, there grew many sets of formalities among the members of the society. There is no denying the fact that the women folk take active part with utmost enthusiasm. Among the women folk of different

societies emphasis is laid on some formalities besides observing the scriptural guidelines. Among them singing of wedding songs and verses are, one of its kind.

Assam is a land of diverse ethnic tribes and racial groups. Therefore, the form of observance of the wedding ceremony differs among its inhabitants. Even then, the general Assamese sub-nationality possesses a uniform pattern to observe a wedding ceremony with common practice.

In the course of preparing a research paper on this subject, the proposer had the opportunity of being acquainted with some of such fine specimen of music and was tempted to study and analyze the tonal and rhythmic wealth of Assamese wedding songs. In general, the Assamese wedding songs are almost the same, but in structural and tonal application, there grew some differences among different groups and communities due to their being belong to different places and times. Such variations made it more attractive and useful for comparative analysis not within the framework but in the context of Indian classical music - particularly the Raga music of North Indian School. That should not be confused as influence of Ragas on the folk variety of Assam; rather, it could reversely be understood that since the basis of the Ragas are the folk one, there lie the distant echoes of the common people's music in certain forms of the classical Raga. This is really a very interesting subject, that demands further exploration and elaboration. In this context, one should not miss the point that Indian classical treatises on music, dance and drama owe their origin to the folk varieties of different regions and areas that were prevalent at the time of preparing these works. Because of oral transmission and traditional inheritance, the folk category has undergone changes of serious nature.

The general features of all folk songs of North-East India including the wedding songs of Assam may be noted as follows:

1. In tonal structure, the maximum range, covered by these songs, do not go beyond pentatonic in the same octave. Of course, sometimes exceptions may be found.
2. In these songs, use of soft 'Gandhar' is also a peculiarity. Similarly, preponderance of the chord, soft 'Nishad' is also there.
3. There are three types of rhythmic patterns found in the folk songs of North-East India. But the peculiarity of the wedding songs seems to have the tendency for 'seven matra' circle, other two rhythmic patterns are of three and four matras. Use of seven matra tala is not frequently found in other folk songs of the region.

Just like a Hindu wedding, an Assamese wedding also has pre-wedding and post- wedding rituals. It is simple and yet very elegant. One of the unique and indispensable characteristic of the

Assamese wedding ceremony is the traditional 'Biyä Näm' or the wedding songs. In Assamese, 'Biyä' means wedding and "Näm" means songs. 'Biyä Näm' is the wedding songs.

An Assamese wedding ceremony is a musical wedding ceremony. At every stage of the celebration-from the early negotiations to the end-women sing songs befitting to it. The women folk of both the bride and the bridegroom's side sing these songs separately in various occasions. The delicacy and refinement of a woman's heart come out in caressing tunes when the 'Nämoti' or leader of the chorus has to describe with variant melodic pattern, the beauty and grace of the bride, when the latter is bathed in sacred water, when she sits among her companions, when the bridegroom is to be greeted, when the 'sampradän' is consummated. The Nämoti's genius is revealed most when she has to compose the song instantly on the spot and sing and at the same time give expression to the atmosphere of sadness that prevails when the dear girl is to be taken away. In some of these songs, the sentiments and descriptions cling to the names of 'Hara' and 'Goüri', the ideal couple to the Indian mind, and 'Sri-Krishna' and 'Rükmini', or even 'Räma' and 'Xitä'(Sita). Likewise, the bridegroom's mother resembles as 'Devaki' or 'Koüxalyä' (Kaushalya) and the bride's mother as 'Menakä'.

In Assam, a wedding ceremony consists of five days. The songs sung in each of these days are different: containing different tunes and different sentiments. In the Assamese society, the bridegroom is called as the 'Darä' and the bride is the 'Koinä'. The very first day of the ceremony is popularly known as 'Jörön'. In this day, beautiful ornaments, clothes, cosmetics and other materials are sent to the bride's place. This present to the bride is sent in charge of the mother of the bridegroom and a number of women always accompany it. They embellish the bride with beautiful ornaments, clothes and put 'Xendür' (the Vermillion) on her head, singing the songs of sorrow and merriment:

1. Jörönar Dinar Güt: (*The Songs sung on the day of 'Jörön'*)

Song No. (i) (*At the bridegroom's place*):

When the bridegroom's mother prepares to leave for the bride's place, the women present there produce 'Ürüli' (a thrilling sound produced by women moving the tongue in the mouth, considered to be an auspicious sign) and then taking the name of God as 'Oh Hari, Oh Räm', they start singing the following song :

Öläi ähä Rämär Mätüri Rajär Mahädoi
Xübha khyone jätä kori Jörön diyüngo

Khärü löwä Mani löwä Kündal Xätexori
 Tel Xendür Phani Käkoï löwä Xaräi bhoi
 Pätö löwä Mügär löwä ärü Mejänköri
 Bhär päsi xajäi löwä oti jatan kori

Song No.ii) Jörön Ädori Änöte Göwä Güt: (Song sung while receiving the bridegroom's mother by the bride's mother at her place with warmth and civility):

Rämäre Janani pälehi Biyoni
 Äse kalar talat roi,
 Hätate Xaräi loi jöwä Äideür mäke
 Biyonik ädorä goi.

Song No.iii) Jörön Pindhäöte Göwä Güt: (Song sung at the time of putting new ornaments, clothes and the 'Xendür' on the bride):

Dölä änä Düliyä Jäpi änä logüwä
 Jörön ähi roi äse, Äideük mät logöwä.
 Rämäre gharare oye alankäre
 Änisö Xaräi bharäi, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...
 Bhitarate bohi ki karä Jänoki
 Löwähi mäthä döwäi, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...
 Koikeyi, Xümiträ, Kouxalyä ähise
 Rämäre alankär loi, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...
 Öläi ähä Xitä löwähi xädori
 Deütär ädex loi, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...
 Khärü loi ähisö Mani loi ähisö
 Ärü loi ähisö Tel, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...
 Xügondhi Xendürar edhöp loi ähisö
 Göndhate ämöi möi, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...
 Hätaloï änisö Xönar Müthi Khärü
 Känaloï änisö Kerü, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...
 Kakäl säi änisö Xinghäpar Mekhelä
 Köne beyä böle bärü, he Dölä änä Düliyä ...

Song No. (iv)

Märär Alankär thöwä käti kori
 Oi Räm, Deütärär Alankär thöwä he
 Räm di pathäise xübarna Alankär
 Oi Räm, häte jöre kori löwä he.

2. Pāni Tōlār Gīt :

In both the places of the bride and the bridegroom, a circular diagram is marked on the earth called the 'Maral', upon which is placed a small earthen pot containing water and a few tender leaves of Mango tree. During their respective embellishments, the bride and the bridegroom sits before it. Their respective mothers change the water put in the pot every day. But the mother does not pour water from her own but from the river or lake nearby or the pond of the neighborhood. The females accompany her to pour water singing the following songs. These songs are popularly known as 'Pāni Tōlār Gīt'.

Song No. v)

Pāni tūliboloi ölöwä Doiboki
 Kāxate Koloshi loi
 Äge päse bhori xakalö Göpiye
 Gangär Jal änime goi,
 Gangär Jal änögoi Gayär Jal änö goi
 Ärü Jal änö goi Kāxär,
 Gangä Bhägirothik namäi loi änö goi
 Ratna Ximhäxanat üthi,
 Düroi koi pūkhūri khanälä Deütä
 Bandhālā xendürī äli
 Tārö soupäxe Kadam rūi dilä
 Tär mäje Bokūlar xäri
 Düroi koi pūkhūri khanälä Deütä
 Bāndhilä xendürī äli
 Ämär Doiboki ye khöj diba nöwäre
 Tiyonhor jäli jen bhori
 Jäö bege dhori nepäö khare kori
 Kote bä Jomünä noi
 Külü külü xüre jäi dhire dhire
 Kadamar taledi boi
 Riniki riniki dekhisö Jomünä
 Boi äse Kadamar tale
 Nanda shyäme känäi kadamat üthise
 Diye ki nidiye jole
 Jomünär dhou dekhi ämär kompe hiyā
 Ghäte näö sopäi diyä o' Näworiyä
 Xaragate phūli äse thūpi thūpi tarä
 Äimätřiye pāni töle näse Apeswarä.

Song No.vi) Pāni Tūli Ūbhoti Āhōte Gōwā Gīt: (The Song sung on the way to home):

Phül sandan tūloxi
Bhoril ne nobhoril Rādhā tōmār kolosi
Jal bhoril Jaxödā phül sandan tūloxi
Pāsaloil nāsābā phül sandan tūloxi
Xāgarō āhiba bhāgi he,
Phül sandan tūloxi
Bhoril ne nobhoril Rādhā tōmār kolosi

Song No. (vii)

Rām Krishna, Jal bhoril Kouxalyā
Rām Krishna, Pāsaloil nāsābā
Hari mōr oi, Xāgarō āhiba bhāgi
Rām Krishna, Xāgarō bhāgiba,
Rām Krishna, jagarō lāgiba
Hari mōr oi, nibohi Rāijakō dhoril
Rām Krishna, pancha baranate,
Rām Krishna, pānsōtā tekeli
Hari mōr oi, fotik baraniyā pāni
Rām Krishna, āji Rāmar ghare
Rām Krishna, kibā Jagya kare
Hari mōr oi, anāise Jomünār pāni
Rām Krishna, lagāi thoi āhisō
Rām Krishna, Xōnar khūti gasā
Hari mōr oi, etiyāi āhōgoi būli
Rām Krishna, jalar kūnworī ye
Rām Krishna rakhāi thoisile
Hari mōr oi, mōkō loi jōwā būli
Rām Krishna, Rāmsandrār tapasyā
Rām Krishna, sōwā Bātorūwā
Hari mōr oi, pathe mori pare prajā.
Rām Krishna, banar banesarāi
Rām Krishna, mare dhare farāi
Hari mōr oi, eri thoi khāgorir pajā

Räm Krishna, Räm sandrar podüli
 Räm Krishna, üdüli müdüli
 Hari mör oi, jäboloi pöwä näi bät
 Räm Krishna, khar koi jöwä goi
 Räm Krishna, Räm sandrak köwä goi
 Hari mör oi, Räj jak loagäök hi mät
 Räm Krishna, düwär mel Düwori
 Räm Krishna, oh Jön künwori
 Hari mör oi, düwärat ghünüsä jori
 Räm Krishna, xilar päte düwär
 Räm Krishna, meli de Düwori
 Hari mör oi, xalakhä märi de dhor
 Räm Krishna, sälat pänī dibä
 Räm Krishna, dhäre nisingibä
 Hari mör oi oti xäbadhäne hobä
 Räm Krishna, niyom koi xömäbä
 Räm Krishna, pisoli poribä
 Hari mör oi, Maral säi tekeli thobä.

3. Nöwäöte Göwä Güt

Song No. viii) Darä Nöwöwä Güt :

After pouring water, the mother and other women apply pastes of raw turmeric and black gram mixed with mustard oil on the bridegroom's body as preparatory to bathing him singing the following song :

Öläi ähä Räm sandra Kadamate dhor
 Nöwäboloi roiyä äse Kouxalyä xündori
 Öläi ähä Räm sandra düwär - dolir bāj
 Janani nöwäba läge nokoribä läj
 Äm pülir xäri xäri Tüloxire dhäri
 Öläi ähä Räm sandra jibar odhikäri
 Öläi ähä Räm sandra mätit mangal säi
 Ganake ganitä kare khyon xäri jäi
 Äni thoisö gandha tel päri thoisö pirä

Täte ähi päö diyä xönare sekürä
Öläi ähä Rämsandra häte dhonü-xar
Kiyö beli karä Räm deba Roghübar
Parbatäre käne käne ximha äse sori
Kiyö beli karä Räm oti müti kori

Song No. ix) Kainä Nöwöwä Gît :

In the bride's place too, similar ritual has been performed singing the following song :

Xönare bätite Mähe Hälodhi
Rüpare bätite Doi
Äideük nöwäboloi Menakä ähise
Mükhate hänhi ti loi.
Hälodhi jögöwäi Hälodhi jögäle
Teliyäi jögäle Tel
Gangä jale mäangi Mäke jögäle
Deütäke jögäle mel.

4. Mürat Säwl diyä Gît

After the ritual of the sacred bath, five minor girls take a handful of rice and put the hands on the bride or the bridegroom's head together. At that time, the following songs are sung. Only after completion of the songs, the girls remove their hands.

Song No. x) Song sung at the bridegroom's place:

Äge diyä päse diyä, äge diyä päse diyä
Pancha Äyotiye, Räm Räm, Pancha Äyotiye
Dürbä ghätar pänī äni, Dürbä ghätar pänī äni
Rämar mürat diye, Räm Räm, Rämar mürat diye.
Pükhürüt pänī näi, Pükhürüt pänī näi
Pärake nübüre, Räm Räm, pärake nübüre
Äranyate pokhī gane, Äranyate pokhī gane

Jäke jäke üre, Räm Räm, jäke jäke üre.
 Koliyä Tüloxī jüpi, koliyä Tüloxī jüpi
 Sokoliyä pät, Räm Räm, sokoliyä pät.
 Snän kori Rämsandra, snän kori Rämsandra
 Mürat diye hät, Räm Räm, mürat diye hät.
 Koliyä Tüloxī tale, koliyä Tüloxī tale
 Mriga pohü sare, Räm Räm, Mriga pohü sare
 Täke dekhi Rämsandra täke dekhi Rämsandra
 Hara Dhonü jöre, Räm Räm, Hara Dhonü jöre.
 Nodhoribä Hara Dhonü, nodhoribä Hara Dhonü,
 Göpi dise häk, Räm Räm, Göpi dise häk
 Äbosye Jänoki äji, äbosye Jänoki äji
 Boriba tömäk, Räm Räm, boriba tömäk
 Potita päwana Hari, potita päwana Hari
 Potita päwana, Räm Räm, potita päwana
 Potitak notorile, potitak notorile
 Näme ki karan, Räm Räm, näme ki karan
 Mädhobar rangä düi, Mädhobar rangä düi
 Sarane dhoriyä, Räm Räm, sarane dhoriyä
 Räm näm rasa piü Räm näm rasa piü
 Anjoli bhoriyä, Räm Räm, anjoli bhoriyä
 Xönar pindhe Rüpar pindhe, Xönar pindhe Rüpar pindhe
 Pindhe Pätor xäje, Räm Räm, pindhe Pätor xäje
 Debänga bhüxana bastra Debänga bhüxana bastra
 İndrai dise äni, Räm Räm, İndrai dise äni.

Song No. xi) Song sung at the bride's place

In the bride's place, the song sung is of similar kind in tune, except a few dissimilar lines:

Äge diyä päse diyä, äge diyä päse diyä
 Pancha Äyoti ye, Räm Räm, pancha Äyoti ye
 Dürbä ghätar pänī äni, Dürbä ghätar pänī äni
 Äideür mürat diye, Räm Räm, Äideür mürat diye.
 Pükhürite pänī nāi Pükhürite pänī nāi
 Pärake nübüre Räm Räm päroke nübüre
 Aranyate pokhī gane, aranyate pokhī gane

Jäke jäke üre, Räm Räm, Jäke jäke üre
 Pükhüri re soüpäxe, pükhüri re soüpäxe
 Khägorire berä, Räm Räm, khägorire berä
 Äideüre bibäh hoise Äideü re bibäh hoise
 Näse Apesworä, Räm Räm, näse Apesworä.
 Xönar pindhe, Rüpar pindhe, Xönar pindhe Rüpar pindhe
 Pindhe Pätor xäje, Räm Räm, pindhe pätor xäje
 Debänga bhüxon pindhe, Debänga bhüxon pindhe
 Indroi dise äni, Räm Räm, Indroi dise äni
 Löke dise fotik mälä, Löke dise fotik mälä
 Ämi dime ki, Räm Räm, ämi dime ki
 Dharam dhori biyä dim e. dharam dhori biyä dim e
 Dharamare ji, Räm Räm, Dharamare ji.
 Xübha khyonat bibäh hobo, xübha khyonat bibäh hobo
 Tüli bändhä süli, Räm Räm, tüli bändhä süli
 Doli märi diyä säöl, doli märi diyä säöl
 Öparaloi büli, Räm Räm, öparaloi büli.

5. *Odhibäxar Gīt*

In an Assamese marriage, a ritual is performed in the evening of the day, at both the places of the bride and the bridegroom previous to the date of solemnizing the main ritual. This ritual is called the 'Odhibäx'. In this very day also, women folk sing songs -

Song No. xii) (Song sung at the bridegroom's place)

Käiloi bibähare din äji Odhibäx
 Gaja goti gamanate füre layaläx.
 Päri änä pakä Dälim päri änä Bel.
 Äji Rämare Odhibäxat läge Gandha tel.
 Säri fäle säri kápör mäje Ghiün säki
 Odhibäx päte Räm Pürühitak mäti
 Gandhe püspe dhüpe dipe xojäi thoisö Känhi
 Kritänjoli kori Räm Sandra äse bohi
 Dodhi thoisö dügdha thoisö ärü nänä fal
 Räm proti tüsta höwä Debotä xakal.

Song No. xiii) (Song sung at the bride's place)

Pãri ânã pakã Dãlim pãri ânã Bel
 Äji Äideür Oðhibãxat läge Gandha tel.
 Bãhi fül thöwã Äideü säjö fül thöwã
 Ki ki fular mälã läge Dãdär ägat köwã.
 Gä dhüi Äideü ye dhyãn kori äse
 Patra likhi sinte mane Bedanidhi päse
 Bedanidhi Gürü Bãpük anãle moatãi
 patra likhi diyã Äideü Mãdhabare thãi
 Bedanidhi Bãpü tömãr saranate dharö
 Krishnak äni dibã büli bar bãnsã karö
 Patrakhani loi Bãpu Krishnar häte dibã
 Köneö najanã kori güpüte rãkhibã
 Bedanidhi Bãpü tümi Kãrjya karã xiddhi
 Dwãrokãt bãrttä diyã ähak Günanidhi
 Xübha khyonat jätrã kori Dwãrokã loi jöwã
 Mãdhabar häte mör patra khani diyã
 Jöwã Bedandhi Bãpü Dwãrokãr pathe
 Patra päi äpuni ähiba Jagannãthe
 Probhür kãrane mör biyãkül man
 Xighre ähi mör jen kare poritrãn.
 Jodi mök Sri Krishnai nakarãi biyã
 Jamar hätat mör xamarpiba hiyã.

6. Doiyan Diyã Güt

'Doiyan Diyã' is the ritual of anointing the bride and the bridegroom with curdled milk in the twilight of the morning of the wedding day. The songs sung on this very occasion is called 'Doiyan Diyã Güt'. Following are the songs sung at the places of both the bride and the bridegroom :

Song No. xiv) (Song sung at the bridegroom's place)

Üthã üthã Rãmsandra nüthile jagar
 Äji böle jäba läge Mithilã nagar.

Düwärate roi äse Kouxalyä xündori
 Kiya beli karä Räm üthä bege kori
 Äyoti xakale Ximhadüwärate roi
 Diba khöje Xübha Doiyan üthä lähe koi
 Doiyan diyä Doiyan diyä äpönäre Äi
 Bhäle kori Doiyan diyä xorir jüräi.

Song No. xv) (Song sung at the bride's place)

Üthä üthä Äideü ye nüthile nahai
 Äji tömär bibäh hoise Doiyan xamai
 Äyoti xakale Ximhadüwärate roi
 Diba khöje Xübha Doiyan üthä lähe koi
 Ägabähi ähä Äideü düwär mükhaloi
 Tömär Äiye Doiyan diba äthü kähi loi
 Doiyan diyä Doiyan diyä äpönäre Äi
 Bhäle kori Doiyan diyä ei bärei jäi.

7. Darä Xajöwä Gît

The song sung during the embellishment of the bridegroom is known as 'Darä Xajöwä Gît'. The song is as follows:

Song No. xvi) Darä Xajöwä Gît:

Oh mör amiyä, Rämäk xajäboloi näi xamaniyä
 Rämäk xajäboloi könjan bohise
 Soküjör dekhisö bhäle, oh mör amiyä . . .
 Chandanare föt beyä hoi jodi
 Gä xäriboloi täne, oh mör amiyä . . .
 Hätike xajäle Hätiyäl Borüä
 Ghöräkö xajäle ghänhi, oh mör amiyä . . .
 Ämär Rämsandrak xajäi xamaniyäi
 Ämi säi äsö bohi, oh mör amiyä . . .
 Sandra siküne, Xürjya siküne
 Xitär man mühiba parä, oh mör amiyä . . .

8. Koinä Xajöwä Gît

While embellishing the bride, ‘Koinä Xajöwä Gît’ is sung. The following three are the ‘Koinä Xajöwä Gît’:

Song No. (xvii)

Ämäre Äideü, Dhän käte Äghönat
 Xajäba lägise Dhän käte Äghönat
 Mänik sitiki pare he
 Dhän käte Äghönat Küli kände Phägünat
 Kiyo Äideü koisilä biyā nahoü jībanat

Song No. (xviii)

Gä dhui Äideu ye Mākak xüdhile
 Ki xäj xaläba päi he
 Sän te xüküwä müthite lüküwä
 Xei xäje xaläba päi he

Song No. (xix)

Berate likhile bere Moüräsoräi
 Düwärat likhile Häti
 Barkalä pätat likhe xorü Bhäiye
 Roghünäth ähiba äji
 Raghünäth ähiba Xönar fül äniba
 Äideür khöpäloi säi
 Tümi Äideü ye sintä nokoribä
 Khöpätö poriba khäi
 Läi häle jäle äbeli batähe
 Laphä häle jäle päte
 Ämäre Äideü hälise jälise
 Käli äbelire bhäte
 Äideür tapasyä söwa Xamaniyä
 Sötäl bhori pare prajā
 Äideür Bangalär rüwät Xön saröwä

Fotikar kãmire xajä
 Äkäxat jilike rüpäli däware
 Ärü jilikise jön
 Tümi Äideü ki jagar lagälä
 Nähe xajäbale kön
 Sandra siküne Xürjya siküne
 Sikün Xaragar Tarä
 Xabätökoi siküni ämäre Äideü
 Darä man mühiba parä
 Häte kiye säbä Häti xüre jen
 Bhorire kiye säbä götä
 Mükhe kiye säbä Pürnimä re Sandra
 Kapäl kiye säbä fôtâ
 Hätare ängüli päbüri päbüri
 Bhorire ängüli ghane
 Kinö Xähu Äiye söwäli tülile
 säi thäkibare mane.

9. Xüwägüri Tölä Güt

Before welcoming the bridegroom or seeing the bridegroom's face, the bride's mother observes a ritual known as 'Xüwägüri Tölä'. In this very moment also, women folk sing song:

Song No.(xx)

Xüwägüri tülivaloi
 Ölöwä Doibokï
 Käxate Koloshï loi
 Xüwägüri tülivaloi
 Ölöwä Doibokï
 Rüpät dhüpe dhünä loi
 Sötälar düborï
 Tölö xüwägüri
 Räm äse podülit roi
 Xüwägüri tüli
 Änim goi ädori, Hätat lärü güwä-pän loi

10. 'Darä Ädarü' or 'Kalar gürit Göwü' Güt

When the bridegroom and his friends and relatives arrive at the bride's place, they do not enter at once. They stand in front of the gate, where two banana plants are put as an auspicious sign. They enter when the bride's parents, elder siblings and other relatives welcome the bridegroom, offering gifts to him. During this period, the following songs are sung :

Song No.(xxi)

Xiva Gönxäi ähise, dambarü bajäise
 Xahürar podülit koinä bhikkhä mängise
 Ähä Böpä ähä hi, Rabhär talat bahä hi
 Hömar Jüik xäkkhi kori Äideük grahan karä hi

Song No. (xxii)

Lökar Kalar talat ki karä Rämsandra
 Oi Räm, Niyare dhorise säti
 Äse diyä dän näi jodi Xamidhän
 Oi Räm, nothobä Rämsandrak räkhi
 Batäh boroxüne öndölai ähise
 Oi Räm, hätat näkiyä säti
 Bhitarate bohi ki karä Jetheri
 Oi Räm, niyähi Boinäik mäti
 Dölä dhar Düliyä Jäpi dhar Logüwä
 Oi Räm, Jetheri mälä pindhäi
 Mälä di Jetheri misiki hánhile
 Oi Räm, bar bhäl möre Boinäi
 Jetheri ädare Xohüre ädare
 Oi Räm, Xähü ädariba päse
 Bhitarate bohi ki karä Xähü Äi
 Oi Räm, kot kori äsä helä
 Bhitarate bohi ki karä Xähü Äi
 Oi Räm, jäi dharamare belä.

11. Hömar Gürit Göwä Güt

At last, the bride and the bridegroom sit together in front of the Holy Fire (the Höma), where the sacred Vedic hymns are spelt. With the spelling of these sacred hymns by the holy Priest, the women also sing song in the following way:

Song No. (xxiii)

Lorä kälar kathä Räm käti kori thöwä
 Bibähar Küxa-jal häte tüli löwä
 Bidhi säi Pürühit kare Onüsthän
 Janake anäise mäti diba kanyädän
 Öparate Sandratäp tale Ghiün säki
 Pätise dharmare biyä xabe äsö xäkhi
 Gandhe püspe dhüpe dipe xajäi thoise känhi
 Kritänjoli kori Rämsandra äse bohi
 Dodhi thoisö dügha thoisö ärü nänä fal
 Rämar proti tüsta höwä Debatä xakal.
 Sandra Xürjya Bäyü Borün xabe hobä xäkhi
 Janake koriba kanyädän äji räti.

Song No.(xxiv)

Kündil nagarate kihore ürüli
 Köne kändibare xünü
 Bhismaakar jiyori Rükmini xündori
 Teünke kändibare xünü
 Kündil nagarate Rojäi kore kanyädän
 Dharmar bändhise Doül parbat xamän
 Bäün häte Bhismaaka Rajä xönhäte Hari
 Tär mäje prakäxise Rükmini xündori

Song No. (xxv)

Hömar jüir täpate gä kolä hole
 Kápör kolä hole ghäme
 Äideük päboloi einö loti-ghoti
 Manate bhäbi säisä ne
 Epöwä döpöwä xäte xätö pöwä
 Kopili gorüre ghiün
 Äkhoi re äjoli löwä he Äideü
 Äkhoi re äjoli löwä
 Agnik xäkhi kori fül mälä loi
 Rämsandrak baran korä

12. Bidäyar Xamayät Göwä Güt: (Songs sung during 'bidaai')***Song No.(xxvi)***

Hatat pän-batä loi Deütäräk köwä goi
 Maramar Deütä oi, jäbaloi ölälö
 Jäbore xamayät xewä he janälö

Song No.(xxvii)

Bärir päs phäle kände Tät-xäle
 Sälat kändile Üghä-Serekiye
 Xamäjar mäjäte Deütäke kände oi
 Märalat kände Mäke

13. Jörä Näm

It happens sometimes that the women of the bridegroom's side, make slighting remarks upon the bride in order to extol the excellences of the bridegroom. The bride's companions do not take the insult lying down and make proper retorts. The contest is considered to be an innocent sport - usually ends in good humor. These hits are known as 'Jörä Näm' or couple-song in upper Assam, and 'Khijägüt / Khisägüt' or teasing-song in lower Assam.

Song No.(xxviii)

Äli nahai bäli pät
Darä gharar Nämötir
Mükh nahai Kosüpät

Song No. (xxix)

Kensir äge käte ne
Bejir äge bindhe ne
Xadäi ahä Rämsandrak
Ädoriba läge ne !

Song No. (xxx)

Oh binondiyä
Säti däangi dharä
Ämi säön Bhinihik
Bhinihi keneküwä !

Song No. (xxxi)

Xägarar päni lüniyä
Noboü nahai dhüniyä
Ämär Dädä xakat äbat
Xomäjote jilikä !

Song No. (xxxii)

Makäl bänhar lekesi
Xifälar Nämötir
Mükh bhängim thekesi!

Song No. (xxxiii)

Älügüti dom dom
Kosügüti dom dom
Xifalar Nämotik Göbarate püti thom !

Conclusion:

As time advanced, these rites and rituals have become almost obsolete in modern urban society. Even in rural areas too, gradually, these rites and rituals have lost their pristine glory and attraction which could offer spiritual solace as well as entertain the people in earlier days. Even then, besides music, these songs reflect the social behavior, norms, ideas and motives and a lot of such subjects. The literary merit also could not be denied altogether. The conscious sections of social thinkers have realized the importance of such institutions and also the art and literature associated with these functions and festivities. Although, basically a subject of folkloristic studies, the music part of the wedding songs demand due attention for their inherent qualities – which are reactions of individuals but has attained the status of social treasure. Considering the importance of the Wedding songs, it is felt necessary to preserve them through proper documentation and to analyze the musical value as contained in these compositions.

Scheme of Transcription of Assamese words indicating the pronunciation:

<i>S.No</i>	<i>Roman</i>	<i>Assamese Letter</i>	<i>Pronunciation Letter</i>
1.	A	অ	‘o’ as English God
2.	Ä	আ	As Hindi आ
3.	i, i	ই,ঐ	As Hindi इ, ई
4.	Ü	উ,ঊ	As Hindi उ, ऊ
5.	E	এ	As Hindi ए
6.	Oi	ঔ	Diphthongal glide from ‘o’ to ‘i’/ as Hindi ऐ
7.	O	অ’	As ‘ou’ in English ‘Court’
8.	Ö	ও	As Hindi ओ
9.	Oü	ঔ	As Hindi औ
10.	Ng	ঙ, ঙ	As Hindi ङ
11.	f, ph	ফ	As Hindi फ
12.	X	শ,ষ,স	-

Method:

Since Assamese wedding songs are transmitted orally from generation to generation, no written records of earlier times are available. Hence, the proposer had to collect these songs from the elderly women, especially of the rural area.

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