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(संसद के अधिनियम द्वारा स्थापित केंद्रीय विश्वविद्यालय)
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Gīts of Biyāh-gowā Ojāpālī: An expository study**” submitted to the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tezpur University in part fulfilment for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Cultural studies, is a record of research work carried out by Ms. Lopa Das under my supervision and guidance.

All help received by her from various sources have been duly acknowledged.

No part of this thesis has been submitted elsewhere for award of any other degree.

Prof. Prasanta Kumar Das

Supervisor

Professor

Dept. of English

Humanities and Social Sciences

Tezpur University

Dr. Madhurima Goswami

Co-Supervisor

Associate Professor

Cultural Studies

Humanities and Social Sciences

Tezpur University

Date: 4/4/2024

Place: Tezpur University

DECLARATION

I, Lopa Das, do hereby declare that this thesis titled “**Gīts of Biyāh-gowā Ojāpāli: An expository study**” submitted by me to Tezpur University in part fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Cultural studies under the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, is my original and independent research work. This work has not been submitted to any University including Tezpur University for any degree or diploma. Other works/publications referred and cited in this research work have been appropriately acknowledged here.

Date:

Place: Tezpur



(Lopa Das)

Regn. No. TZ203924 of 2023

DECLARATION

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Acknowledgments

It is my pleasure and privilege to gratefully acknowledge the support and guidance I received from my supervisors Professor Prasanta Kumar Das and Dr. Madhurima Goswami without whose generosity and wisdom the present work would not have been completed. Late Dr. Nabin Chandra Sarma, eminent folklorist of Assam, has been my inspiration for many years. His important and pioneering contribution, *Asamar Paribesya Kalā: Ojāpāli*, published in 1996, remains the authoritative work for all *Ojāpāli* scholars. He has been immensely keen that the performance aspects, especially the *Gīts* (songs), of *Biyāh-gowā Ojāpāli* (an aspect he felt was not addressed adequately in his own work) be researched and documented in an independent piece of work. Many a time he would encourage me to take up this responsibility and I have always considered it a duty and a privilege to oblige him. In a way, his blessings remain the genesis of my present work. I shall be forever indebted to Professor Ranjit Kumar Dev Goswami, Ex-Sankaradeva Chair, CAS, Tezpur University for believing in me and motivating me to set this unexplored aspect of *Biyāh-gowā Ojāpāli* as a research goal .

I would like to place on record my profound gratitude and obeisance towards my gurus Sri Dharmeswar Nath Oja, doyen of *Biyāh-gowā Ojāpāli* and Sangeet Natak Academy awardee (2022) and Sri Rajendra Nath Oja of *Suknani Ojāpāli*. It was their continued assurance that the *Gīts* of *Biyāh-gowā Ojāpāli* need to be correctly documented and passed on that has also inspired me to undertake this project. Their unfailing faith in me throughout these many years, their blessings towards this project, have stood me in good stead through many a difficult phase.

As with many performing arts, in *Ojāpāli* too, there are several closely-guarded performance secrets that are not readily parted with by their custodians. I am indebted to Oja Dharmakanta Deba who deemed me ready and capable of receiving the knowledge he had been a custodian of for many decades. During the course of my field work spanning more than six years, I have also received overwhelming support from members of the *Ojāpāli*

groups and the people of Darrang whom I had approached for information and knowledge that have made my research possible. I was touched by the way how many of the performers came forward to generously answer the queries relating to this work. This thesis belongs to them as well, and I have been a willing and privileged mediator between them and the academic world.

As a learner-performer of *Biyāh-gowā Ojāpāli* who has for a couple of years donned the responsible role of an *Ojā*, it is imperative that I acknowledge the encouragement for my academic work I have been receiving from my *Pālis*, Hari Saharia, Rita Talukdar, Jagadish Das, Deeplekha Talukdar, Bhanita Dekha and Jiyaan Barua. To them I remain affectionately obliged.

My music mentors Leona Talukdar and Sasanka Kalita have lent this work their expertise so that I was able to enhance my understanding of, and document the grammatical structure of the music of *Biyāh-gowā Ojāpāli*. I cannot thank them enough for their generosity and valuable guidance to complete this research activity that dealt with a rather difficult and hitherto unaddressed aspect of the music of this performing art. Jeuti Talukdar undertook the arduous task of preparing and typing out the notations of all the *Gīts* and Jiyaan helped me in meticulously preparing the materials collected from fieldwork to be included in this thesis. To both I am immensely grateful.

To my family I owe my heartfelt gratitude. My husband Manasjyoti Talukdar has not only encouraged me throughout but has also taken keen interest and steps to ensure that I receive all the logistical support relating to my numerous field trips. To my son Eshan I owe my gratitude and love for having adjusted to my barring schedules and absence from home during his growing years. To my mother who has always been a pillar of strength, my elder sister and my extended family I remain thankful for their encouragement, concern and affectionate enquiries.

The memory of my father who was an ardent admirer of the *Ojāpāli* art form even when it was not in vogue in the cities as a cultural form remains a strong inspiration for me. To this day memories of his occasional humming

of rural folk tunes continue to inspire me. Perhaps seeing my father, a doctor appreciate rural art forms has motivated me also from the medical profession to make an easy transition to performing arts.

Date:

Lopa Das

Place: Tezpur

DEDICATION

I take the privilege to dedicate this humble work in memory of Late Nabin Chandra Sarma, eminent Folklorist whose inspiration remains the main driving force behind taking up this subject for research work.

Lopa Das

TRANSLITERATION CHART

The following chart shows the speech sounds that comprise the Assamese alphabet and their respective transliterated forms indicated by diacritical marks in the corresponding English alphabet.

অ	-	a
আ (া)	-	ā
ই (ি)	-	i
ঈ (ী)	-	ī
উ (ু)	-	u
ঊ (ূ)	-	ū
ঋ (ৠ)	-	r̄
এ (ে)	-	e
ঐ (ৈ)	-	ai
ও (ৌ)	-	o
ঔ (ৌ)	-	au
ক	-	k
খ	-	kh
গ	-	g
ঘ	-	gh
ঙ	-	ñ
চ	-	c
ছ	-	ch
জ	-	j
ঝ	-	jh
ঞ	-	ñ
ট	-	ṭ
ঠ	-	ṭh
ড	-	ḍ
ঢ	-	ḍh
ণ	-	ṇ

ତ	-	t
ଥ	-	th
ଦ	-	d
ଧ	-	dh
ନ	-	n
ପ	-	p
ଫ	-	ph
ବ	-	b
ଭ	-	bh
ମ	-	m
ଯ	-	y
ର	-	r
ଲ	-	l
ୱ	-	v
ଷ	-	ś
ଠ	-	ṣ
ସ	-	s
ହ	-	h
କ୍ଷ	-	ks
ଜ	-	ḍ
ଝ	-	ḍh
ଞ	-	y
ଂ	-	m
ଃ	-	ah
,	-	n