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Annexure

Sattras and Gompas

1. Performance Calendar (Space, time and purpose)
2. Associated rituals (before, during and after performance) and ritual objects (fasting, pollution period) (Importance of rituals in traditional Sattr/Gompa performances- role of these rituals in creating the 'efficacy' and spiritual value of Sattr/ Gompa based performances.)
3. Are there any rituals while crafting and storing the masks?
4. Importance of masks in these performances. (Is it a mere 'tool' for audience's attention or 'cultural symbols'?)
5. Characterisations in the narratives.
6. How are the characters (who will perform) chosen? (both among bhakats/ bhikkhu and/ or laities?) Why laities are included? Which caste?
7. During the performance, who wears the mask and who does not?
8. Status of the performers and their relationship with non-performers.
9. Influence of mask over the wearer and audience (mask-audience relationship) (and how mask-audience relationship has changed with change in performance space?)
10. Different types of masks and colour code of each mask. (Sources of symbols? Historical/ Mythical, etc.)
11. Are there different motifs (in masks) coming in different period of time?
12. Any adaptation and innovation for survival and/ or revival of masked performers? How do these processes shape mask designs and performances?
13. When masked performances shifted from Sattras, Namghars or Gompa to festival stages? Why? (Connect with more people/ Sattras or Gompa losing importance/ money factors?)
14. Social status of such performances (Ritualistic/ Secular/ Efficacy/ Entertainment)
15. When Cultural groups were formed in Majuli? Reason.
16. How does this traditional ritualistic theatre respond to the shift (of interior and exterior factors)?
 - Power
 - Aesthetics

17. How does it (also people within Sattrra or Gompa reacts) react to shifts in socio-economic and cultural conditions of performers coming from other backgrounds and performances in new public spheres? (Academic courses, State and National Institutes' patronage etc. (non-Sattrra people learning the art form)).
18. How does a 'modern' Bhaona or Cham performance function when its focus has shifted from ritualistic elements towards a theatre of high aesthetics?
19. Are Bhaona or Cham festivals, which last for several days the only means for survival of the elaborate enactment of the plays?
20. Motivation of new performers.
21. Impact of digital technology and tourism on masked performances?
22. Effect of increasing use of new media? (in terms of promoting Bhaona or Cham)
23. How audience impacts the plays? (audience: regional, national, foreign) Any change in performance structure/ narrative keeping in mind the audience?
24. How new patronage structure affect the performances? (Policies behind state sponsorship and national patronage like Republic Day parade, mask making is skill development programme for Make India Proud project)
25. Impacts of institutional recognition. (As Dr. Sanjib Kr. Borkakoti is working towards getting Bhaona recognised by UNESCO's ICH).
26. Continued cultural relevance.
27. Why and how mask became a part of cultural dynamics?
28. How has the cultural heritage influenced the creation of masks?
29. How a male performer prepares himself for impersonating a female character?
30. As every Sattradhikar must write a Bhaona how many newly written Bhaonas are there in your Sattrra? What are the changes in those Bhaona in terms of structure? How are they different from Bhaonas written by Sankardeva and Mahadeva?
31. Which play do you perform mostly?
32. Importance of Guru-Sishya Parampara in learning Bhaona or Cham? (Establishing the relationship between Guru-Shishya as the learned craft).
33. Meaning/ Origin of the word Sattrra/Gompa. How Sattrras or Gompas proliferated?

34. What are the measures required to be taken by the state government and central government to sustain mask making and Bhaona/Cham?
35. Difference between Sishya and Bhakat. How many Bhakats are there in this Sattras? Who can be a Sishya? Process of becoming a Sishya. Is caste a bar for becoming a Sishya/ Bhakat?

Women (new participants of Bhaona)

1. When performed by women – is it a love of consensus or a love of contestation? (in terms of narrative and performance space)
2. Women authored trajectory? Is it a ‘male’ desire to form a women group (of Bhaona) or the idea was put forth by women and pursued by them? (Is it an organic female desire to find space for her creative expression?) Who has the creative/ artistic authority?
3. When and the various ways by which women actors were/ are being integrated within Bhaona performances? Generally, Bhaona is learnt by Guru-Shishya Parampara (within Sattras). So how female participants are learning?
4. Any challenge for not adhering to ‘social’ and religious provisions (as it has always been male performed ritualistic drama)? Any change in social respectability for women performers and Bhaona performed by women? Do audience still consider it a ritualistic performance?
5. Any perceived change in the narrative when performed by females? Had she given the chance to re-write female characters will she write it differently, putting women as central characters? Do they at all feel the need to do so?
6. How women interpret Bhaona texts and find important niches of support within male dominated religious institution? (How they relate to ‘docile’ female characters?)
7. How do you feel/ can you relate with male performers impersonating any females? Why could you relate and forget that he is a male?
8. Do they think women do not have the powers for performing Bhaona?
9. How often do they see Bhaona performed by women? Only women ever watched?

10. Do you remember which play? Does that play affect you in different way than the one performed solely by males?
11. How do you feel as a performer? What points do you keep in mind while enacting women roles?
12. As women audience what motivates/ demotivates you to watch Bhaona performed by women? Do you feel more comfortable? Do you see it as exercising your religious rights?
13. Will you watch Bhaona solely performed by women on religious occasion?
14. Any resistance from your family when you wished to perform in Bhaona?
15. Have you ever wanted to perform in Bhaona? What and who stopped you? Given a chance to perform in future, will you?
16. You do not perform, but your daughter does. What stopped you and what made you give permission to you daughter? Do you see it as a family pride? Exercising of equal religious right? Or it is just learning a performing art?

Cultural Groups

1. When cultural groups were formed in Majuli? Stated by whom? Why? (estd. year)
2. When they started performing Bhaona?
3. Who teach them? Do they take money for teaching?
4. Any objections from Sattras in initial days?
5. Other than Bhaona, what else do they perform?
6. When they started including women? Why?
7. Initial reaction from Sattras and audience?
8. Do they maintain the performance structure?
9. Associated rituals? (fasting, pollution period)
10. Who performs whom? Any caste barriers.
11. How are performers chosen?
12. Do they use masks? For how many characters? Do they learn mask making or buy masks?
13. From where do they generate fund?
14. Do they perform outside Assam? (Competitions)
15. How audience impacts plays? (audience: regional, national, foreign) Any change in performance structure/ narrative keeping in mind the audience?

16. Performance time, space, and purpose (religious; entertainment; spiritual value).
17. Social respectability of these performances and performers. Are they invited when someone wants to 'keep' the Bhaona for ritualistic purpose?
18. From where they buy/ make dresses?
19. What are important aspects of stage-design?
20. Main motive of these performers?
 - Everybody must learn
 - Challenge the power of Sattras
21. How do they innovate their performances to engage audience?
22. Change in narrative? Do they perform in Sanakardeva and Mahadeva's plays? Do they write plays by their own selves? Who write? Why?
23. What is/ are the main things they keep in mind while writing a new play? (Important characters?)
24. If they charge money – why do you think audience buy tickets and come to watch your Bhaona rather than watching for free in Sattras?

Audiences - Bhaona

1. Does Bhaona feel different when watched in Namghar or Sattras and on stage?
2. Motivation for watching Bhaona? (Gratification)
3. Do you think Ankiya Bhaona and Bhaona are different?
4. Have you watched Bhaona performed by women? Where have you seen it?
5. Do you think women should perform in Bhaona? Then why don't they perform in Sattras?
6. Social status of women performers?
7. Social status of male performers?
8. Have you watched Bhaona in Brajavali language? Where mostly seen?
9. Have you watched Bhaona in matribhasha? Where mostly seen? Which one is now mostly popular? Why?
10. How different do they feel like? Do they generate different emotion/ feeling? (IN terms of understanding the dialogues? Why do you think this shift took/ taking place?)

11. Have you watched Bhaona in All Assam Bhaona Samaroho? What do you feel about such festival? Do you think the religiousness in Bhaona gets demeaned due to such competitions/ festivals?
12. What is the social importance(s) of Bhaona?
13. Do you think masks are important in Bhaona? Why?
14. Since when are you watching Bhaona? Who inducted you?
15. Have you ever read an Anikya Bhaona script written by Sankardeva?
16. What are jhumura?
17. Do you think Bhaona performances have changed over the years? What are the perceived changes?
18. Have you ever watched Bhaona organised by cultural groups? Sometimes they charge money? So why do you watch Bhaona by spending money when you can watch it for free?
19. Have you ever watched Bhaona in Raas festival? Which Ankiya Nata is performed during Raas? With whom do you watch? How do you get the enthusiasm to watch Raas for so long hours?
20. Do you click photos while watching Bhaona and share it in facebook/ other social media? Why?
21. Do you take part in any ritual(s) on the day of Bhaona in Sattras? (Naam Prasanga)
22. Have you ever watched Bhaona outside Majuli/ Assam?
23. Which is the most attractive part of Bhaona? Dialogue/ Purbaranga/ Nandi/ Mukha/ Music/ Story/ light? (Importance of Purbaranga/ Nandi?)
24. Importance of Bhaona. (individual, social)
25. Do you think Bhaona can gratify audience without masks?
26. Do you watch Bhaona in YouTube or other social media platform?

Mask-Maker

1. Who initiated you in the process of mask making?
2. At what age?
3. How do you learn the art?
4. Are young generations in your place enthusiastic in learning mask making and why?
5. What motivates you?

6. What types of masks are made here and why?
7. Guidelines for how a mask of a particular character looks like?
8. Are there only males who learn mask making? Why?
9. How are the, masks made for performances different from decorative masks?
10. Who buys masks generally – tourists or laities?
11. Description about process of mask making.
12. What endeavours have been taken by government to promote mask making and masks?
13. Is it a certificate course?
14. What are the incentives received by them?
15. Suggestions to state and central governments to promote masks.
16. Has the number of enthusiastic mask makers decreased over the years?



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