An overview of Mask Making at Khatpar Satra

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Abstract:
Sivasagar district is a historically important district in Assam. There are many ethnic groups in the area and people of different ethnic groups have built bridges of social, cultural and religious harmony in this place. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Mahapurusha Sri Sankaradeva pioneered the Neo-Vaishnavism in Assam. He first preached in central and southern Assam and later came to southern Assam. His close associate was his student Madhaveda. Apart from Sankaradeva, Madhavadevas, Damodardevas and Haridevas also preached Vaishnavism in their own way in southern Assam at that time. After Sankaradeva, the Dharmacharyas founded by Banshigopalder, Gopal Ata, Badula Padma Ata, Keshavcharan, Yadumanidev, Purushottam Tagore, Chaturbhuj Tagore, Ai Kankalata etc. took the lead in spreading this neo-Vaishnavism in southern Assam. There are more than seventy satras in Shivsagar at present. These satras have been promoting religion as well as literature, culture. These satras have contributed significantly to the society through songs, nam-prasangas, dances, bhaonas, puppet dances, observances etc. The research book contains details of some of the prominent satras, especially the festivals celebrated at Khatpar Satra. The masks used in the bhaonas created by Sankardev have now gained international acclaim. This is an overview of the heritage of mask art of Khatpar Satra, one of the satras that made this mask art. The names of the ancient treasures preserved in the satras are also mentioned. It is hoped that this discussion will reveal at least some new information about the social and cultural aspects of the Satras in Shivsagar district. This discussion also provides some information on how masks have been used in different parts of the world outside Assam. There are many different types of masks available in the market. Field study methods and various books, histories, charit puthi etc. related to satras have been used to study the subject.

Keywords: Sivasagar, Khatpar Satra, Mask making, Culture, Heritage

Introduction:
There are many different types of masks used in the folk traditions of Assam. They are used in 'Bharigan', 'Bhasan Yatra', 'Banshi Puran Gan', 'Gowalni Yatra' etc. in South Goalpara. Masks used in traditional worship of the Tiwa people, masks once used by the Sonwals in some traditional rituals and festivals (now extinct) Masks are used in the 'Kali Chandi' worship and dance prevalent in the Dhubri Goalpar region. The mask or mokha of the Ankia Bhaona is a notable pukta’ or cho. In the 15th and 16th centuries AD, the Neo-Vaishnava movement led by Sankaradeva transformed the 'mukha' into a prominent art form in the new genre of song,
drama, instruments and bhaona. He was the first to perform various masks in the play 'Chihnajatra'. There is also a mention in the Bardowa Guru Charit that Madhavdev ordered the weavers to make chariots and masks for the play 'Bamyatra'. Like the character books, there are examples of masked bhaonas in history. The 'Tung-Khungia Buranj' mentions the 'Rukmini Haban' bhaona performed by the Chaliha Bareghar Satra on 18 Fagun 1727 in the royal assembly of Kamalakshan Singh. After the use of masks in drama, the tradition of making masks developed in the post-Sankara period, mainly in satras and namgharas. There are many satras in Assam, including Sri Sri Chamguri Satra in Majuli and Sri Sri Khatpar Satra in Sibsagar district. There are many characters in the 'Bhaona' who need masks, especially those who are scriptural characters who cannot give a person that form despite their best efforts (for example, Ravana, who cannot be joined by ten heads even if a person pretends). To give life a taste of devotion. There are many ways in which you can improve your self-confidence. There are many ways in which you can improve your self-confidence. There are many ways in which you can improve your self-confidence.

Methods and Materials:
There are three types of masks commonly seen in the satras of Assam. These include the so mask, the lotokai mask and the mukha mask. These three types of masks are described below:

**So mask:** So mask is large, covering the whole body. There are only masks in the world that are used in the theatrical tradition and cover the whole body. In his book 'Shankardeva's Shilpakala', Pradipjyoti Mohanta mentions that Kapila Vatsayana (a dance critic) commented that the tradition of making this mask made of bamboo sticks is not found anywhere else. It creates horror and humor in the play. The head and body of this mask are made separately. In bhaona, people enter the mask with their heads tied to their bodies and wear them on their shoulders according to the system. This mask cannot be moved. The mask is wrapped around the waist of the mask so that the viewer cannot see the legs of the person wearing the mask. The mask is about 8-10 feet tall during the performance. Arrangements are made for the masked performer to be seen by the outside audience. These are the characters of the bhaonas. These include Ravana, Banaraja, Kumbhakarna, Mayadanava, Narakasura, Narasimha, Jambavasta, etc. Therefore, it is important to understand the importance of these masks in the life of the person. Therefore, it is important to understand the importance of these masks in the life of the person. The Govardhana mountain of Govardhana Dharan Natak, the Mandar mountain of Amrit Manthan, etc. are also within the Cho Mukha.

**Lotokai Mask:** This mask is smaller than the So-mask. The shape of this mask is almost similar to that of the south mask. The head and body parts of this mask are also made separately. This is why it is called Lotokai Mukha. Like the sword mask, the head of this mask is worn on the person's own head without being tied to the body parts. They put it around the waist of the mask. There are many characters such as Putna Rakshasi, Taraka Rakshasi, Shankhachur, Yaksha etc. who wear Lotokai masks.

**Face mask:** A face mask is a mask worn to cover only the face. During the acting, the mask is worn on the face of the person and the body is covered with various clothes or cholas. Such masks are used for the roles of
Kansa’s Panchani Maris, Subahu, Chakravat, Upananda, etc. Masks of animals, birds, animals, etc. are also made. These include Aghasura, Bakasubha, Dhenukasura, Ananta, Kalinaga, etc.

The mask making system of Assam:

Masks are made in different ways in different parts of India. For example, the masks of Madhya Pradesh are made of wood and the masks of Bihar are made of paper. In Assam, the main materials used to make masks are bamboo, cane, dung, clay, paper, glue, etc. The method of making the mask is as follows:

A good stick: bearing species of bamboo is cut, cut into pieces to the required size and cut into small pieces. The stick is cut with a knife, finely chopped, and the shape of the mask is drawn in the artist’s brain. This my giving is said to be started with the 'Lakshmi Sutra' The artist weaves the mask completely and his hands and feet at the same time.

Wrapping of clothes: The pottery is made of clay from a river or stream, smeared with clay, smeared on it, placed on the bamboo groove from one side, completely covering the sticks and left to dry in the sun. When completely dry in the sun, cover the nose, eyes, etc. with manure.

Cow dung application system: Bring fresh cow dung from the barn in the morning. cow dung from grass-fed cows is more suitable. The manure of grain-fed cows is less sticky and less fine due to its expensiveness. The cow dung of grass-fed cows is suitable for use. The cow dung should be placed on a wide board and ground with a whole bamboo powder or wooden knife or ground into leaves and taken as a sound.

When the mask is well dried, the mud is used to shape the nose, eyes, face, etc. Then cover the previously soaked clay with a cloth and put the candle in a bowl. The wheel is placed on top of the manure on the face. Then the piece of cloth is put on top of it again. After four to five hours, when the cow dung is slightly half dry, it should be ground. Four or five times the tax sound is very fine. Then, when dry, the color is arranged.

Recipe for preparing colour: There are four main colors used to paint the masks in the satras of Assam. For example: hengul, haital, blue, white clay. Depending on the function, these four combinations are painted in different colors. However, nowadays, white clay, glue, etc., which are hardly available in the market, are also used due to the time consuming nature of Hengul Haital. Earlier, the ashes of dried garlic were burnt for black dye and later the smoke from kerosene candles was collected and mixed with the dye to make it stick. Red dye was extracted from hengul, yellow from haital, blue from indigo and white from dhalmati. These take a lot of time to do. It takes up to one and a half months to prepare grass dyes by grinding them with potatoes in fine stone powder. Therefore, the miners in the satras now use more paint available at cheap market prices. Bamboo sticks are used to keep the paint. Brushes made of pigeon feathers and goat hair were the main tools of miners in the past, and today they also use brushes available in the market.

The method of dyeing: There is also a specific method of painting the masks. For example, when applying the color, the mask is wiped with a wet cloth and exposed to the sun. When it is dry, the required color is applied and the nose, ears, hair, cheeks, eyes, etc. are painted.
Precautions in making masks: Even if they are masks, they are considered to be scriptural consciousness, whether they are gods, goddesses, demons or demons. Therefore, it is built with devotion after washing the feet and awakening a holy feeling in the mind.

Results and discussion:
Humans have a desire for beauty. The result of this innate desire for beauty is art. Masks are the oldest folk art treasures made in the shape of the face. In the Chandrakanta Dictionary, it means the shape of a particular face worn on the face; a face made to be worn to change shape; a mask. A mask is a material used to cover the body parts of the face. Although it is not known exactly who, where, when and how masks were made, masks have been widely used in different societies and cultures around the world. These mask-wearing dances are found in different countries of the world. In Nepal, Mahakali Mahatma performs Mahalaxmi dance, Khicha dance, Yama Raj, and Kumari Dance of the Newar community is done. Bhutanese masks are made of wood. The Bhutias wear masks in a dance called 'Durdag' Sri Lankan mask dance is 1000 years old.

The use of mask art in India: Indian masks have occupied a significant place in Indian culture. Mukha is widely used in various theatrical traditions of India.
Mukha is also used in the 'chau' dance of Orissa and West Bengal. Masks are used in the Krishnattam drama of Kerala, and mask-like costumes are also used in several other folk drama traditions such as Teyam.
The mask of Madhya Pradesh is made of wood. They make masks in the shapes of snakes, animals, insects, etc. The 'Narasimha' mask of the Bhagavad Gita is very popular in Andhra Pradesh.
There are also 'mukhas' among the tribes of North East India. The Ajilimu dance, which is popular among the Chebdukpen of Arunachal Pradesh, features the masks of two giants, Nyapa and Nyaro.

Review of Literature:
There are many different types of masks in the Khatpar Satra. The Satradhikar Gopikant Mohanta of this satra did not confine it to the boundaries of the satra but introduced it to the entire Assam and the people of India through widespread discussions. He was awarded the Artist Pension by the Government of Assam in recognition of this. He made about three hundred more masks. Much of it was destroyed in the earthquake. These masks include Garuda, Jatayu, Jambavastu, Asura, Mayura and Bakasura. The masks of this artist were first publicly exhibited in 1948 in Shivsagar. The Director of the Calcutta Museum took two masks of Jambabrinta and Garuda from Mahanta to be displayed in the museum. Gopikant Mahanta's eldest son Revkant Mahanta also practiced mask art. As a result, the mask art of Khatpar Satra has spread from the state level to the inter-state level. The Srimanta Sankardev Kalakshetra in Guwahati has also played a significant role in popularizing this mask art. The masks collected for exhibition at the Kalakshetra are also handmade by Rev. Kanta Mahanta. The Government of Assam provided him with one-time assistance for mask making and entrusted him with the State Industry of Handicrafts. He was also recognized as a Master Craft man by the Academy of Fine Arts in Kolkata. There are still more than 300 masks made by him in the Khatpar Satra. Masks made at Khatpar Satra Brahma, Brahma's vehicle is the swan, Vishnu's vehicle is Garuda, Shiva, Shiva's vehicle is the bull, Ananta Shaya, Ravana, Kavandha, Nrishimha, Varaha, Putna, Bakasura, Dhenukasura,
Taraka Rakshasi, Sutradhar, Jatayu bird, Hanuman and other monkey army, Jambavanta and others Bear army, king ministers and councilors, generals, demon fighters, demon commanders and councilors, common people, other huge masks described in the scriptures, Ganesha, tiger, lion, deer, frog, sun and other masks.

**Conclusion:**

There are many different types of satras in Assam and the Satriya culture is a significant contribution to the life of the Assamese nation. These satra institutions have been spreading the great ideals, culture and virtues of the great saints and mahants for years through various songs, dramas, paintings, puppet dances, crafts and interpretations of various religions. In the present rational age, in the age of rapid advancement of science, there is a sense of doubt and distrust in the minds of people towards religion, but this religious culture created by the great sages cannot be ignored. This culture had a profound impact on the national life of Assam five or six hundred years ago and as a result the Assamese nation forgot the distinction between high and low and built a bridge to a larger Assamese national life. Therefore, it is necessary to shed light on these satras and their culture through study and research. This discussion of the Satras of Shivasagar district is also a small attempt. Khatpar Satra is one of the Purush Sanghati Satras of Shivasagar district, and the festivals celebrated at this Satra. There are also cultural activities participated in by the satra at different times. 'Mask Art in the Heritage of Khatpar Satra', discusses the mask art of Assam by giving a brief overview of how masks have been used in different parts of the world and India. This is followed by a description of how the mask industry has been traditionally practiced in Khatpar Satra and what masks have been made so far.

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