



Dr. Patgiri has been making significant contributions to Assamese society since a very young age. He is recognized nationally for his active participation in theatre as a dramatist, director and composer with "Ajagar", "Srikrishna Arjun aru Gandiva", "Droupadi", "Taralir Akash", "Silalipi", "Agasti Yatra", "Mahavir Lachit", "Chinha Yatra", etc. being some of his best known works.

Besides, he has written many stories, dance dramas, and more than a hundred poems and songs. Some of his famous books include "Jivan aru Jigyasha", "Natya aru Chetana", "Natya Kala Deshe Deshe", "The Philosophical Tradition of Assam", "Folklore & Folklife and Modern Assamese Social Drama", etc. He has also edited many other books.

However, his literary and cultural interests and successes have not diminished Dr. Patgiri's research potential. He is currently the editor of an International Journal on Humanities, namely, Manavayatan (The Humansphere) which deals with the various socio-economic problems of our times. He has participated and has been invited to numerous National and International conferences and seminars. He was highly praised in the seminar of International Congress of Social Philosophy where he presented his research paper on Neo Vaishnavism and Social Philosophy of Srimanta Sankardeva, which was held in New Delhi. He has some 30 research articles to his credit that have been published by some of the most prestigious research centres of India and abroad.

He was also invited to a seminar organized by the Kangwon National University in Republic of Korea and Fu-Jen Catholic University, Republic of China to deliver a lecture as a master class speaker in the 11th International Conference on Philosophical Practice and the 4th International Conference on Humanities Therapy. Dr. Patgiri is known for focusing on issues that are central to Assamese society as he spoke about the therapeutic practice and lyrics of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika. In his lecture at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens in Greece, for instance, he looked at the 'Human values and lyrics of Dr. Bhupen Hazarika' and its philosophical value. In a way, he has managed to set forth an Assamese philosophical tradition that hardly existed before.

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This book aims to find out the elements of folklore and Folklife as reflected in modern Assamese social drama. The analytical approach of the study reveals the rich heritage of folk traditions amidst the changes that have been taking place in society with the influence of Western culture. Such a study is lacking in Assam and hence this book might go a long way in maintaining the traditional cultural heritage in our dynamic society as it fills this research gap.

In this book Dr. Patgiri has sincerely analyzed and expressed the glory of common people's life for the development of people's theatre. This is the first work that has tried to deal with the folkloristic perspective in Assamese drama and theatre.

Folklore & Folklife  
and Modern Assamese Social Drama

Dr. Jagadish Patgiri



# Folklore & Folklife and Modern Assamese Social Drama

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Creative literature is regarded as a bountiful printed source of folklore. Dramatists, novelists and poets employ folk-stuff for artistic purposes. A creative writer very often introduces and develops characters, motivation, scenes, and tensions from traditional oral forms.

In the context of modern Assamese drama, it is said to be an outcome of the influence of two source streams i.e. Sanskrit drama and western drama. But it is equally true that a strong tradition of indigenous folk drama has also played a vital role in the development and presentation of modern Assamese drama. Modern Assamese social plays dealing with rural life are primarily concerned with the folk tradition and elements. This is seen in all spheres of drama, i.e., story dialogue, songs, characters and production. While some narrative folklore is found to be employed in the development of the theme of social drama on one hand, motif from folk and traditional characters are also found as a working force behind the creation of many dramatis personae in many modern Assamese social plays. Moreover, folk speeches and songs also have occupied a major part of dialogue and songs of such plays. To me there is a scope to study modern Assamese social drama from this point of view. But no attempt has far been made to systematically study Assamese social drama in this light yet.