CHAPTER - X

CONCLUSION

The Bodo tribe is the aboriginal tribe of Assam. They have their own rich oral traditions. The oral tradition is a part and parcel of the Bodos. They are able to give their identity through the oral tradition which is coming down from generation to generation. The myths, legends, extant among the Bodo community embody meaningful message from the past.

The *Gibi Bithai* Contains variety of categories of information about God, Myths, Customs, Proverbs, saying, mantras, magic, metre, religions, and festivals. In the *Gibi Bithai* God is known as Bathou or Bathoubrai. He is omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient. He is everything of the world. He is the sun which rises in the east, the water which quenches the thirst of people, he is the *Mainao* (Lakhmi) of the paddy field, he is the sea, hill, sky, water, cloud, day, night etc. Sometimes, He sends representatives to punish the wicked people of this world. He is the only one who can give salvation to a person. He is formless, but he is covered everywhere. Bathou is endless, deathless and permanent. The Author says that the people pray Him with different names, such as Gopal, Rama, Krishna, Bhagawan.

The author has narrated various myths. These myths are creation of sky, myth regarding the formation of solar system, myth regarding the creation of earth, water, trees, flora etc. There are myths recounting the creation of God and Goddesses and myth of *Kherai*, a religious festival. These myths are prevalent among the Bodo community earlier in different times in various forms. The author has gathered the myths from various places and from various scholars. Again in some narratives it is seen that Hindu pantheon narratives have also found assimilation in the *Gibi Bithai*. 
In case of God and Goddesses also it is seen that various Gods of Hinduism such as Siva, Brahma and Vishnu also reveals themselves direct or indirectly with various names, power and function. The Siva is equalised with Sibrai, Brahma as Barmali and Vishnu as Lawkhar Gosai. Jama as Thaima Raza and Indra as Mirugiri the God of rain.

Among the Bodos, there are customs on birth, marriage, death, joy and distress. They follow various rites and rituals in day to day life till now. The traditional Bodo custom is expressed through a saying i.e.:

"sizou-a siriba
sifung-a gurungba
mwnsingsingni-a fongba
thaigira khongba
boroni achara mwnba"

English rendering:-
a siju tree has five ribs,

a flute has five holes,
mwnsingsing preached five rules,
A dillennmia indica fruit has five rinds
Bodo have five laws to do deeds.

In the narrative verse author has discussed the five preachings of Mwnsingsing Guru very elaborately. They are (1) newly born baby must be accepted dearly.
(2) A grown up male of female must be married,(3) a dead must be cremated honourably (4) a person when in joy is not to forget Bathou and (5) a person in distress has to pray Bathou. According to the five preaching’s of priest Mwnsingsing, the ritual customs of Bodos are also five as mentioned by the author. The five rites are when newly born baby, a beggar and any relatives are
honourably to welcome or received. When a person become young the he/she must bound with the tie in marriage is the second ritual custom of Bodos. In the verse author has mentioned three types of marriages. These are Mithinga, mizing and musung haba. According to the author Mithinga haba is not for man, mizing haba is for those person who spend their whole life in quest of wisdom and indevotion to God without marring anybody. Musung haba is divided into haba gwmwn, hinza kharsonnai haba, dhangkha lakhinai haba, gwrzia lakhinai haba and haba gwthar. The third ritual custom is to pray the God during the period of joy and sorrow. Because most of the people forget God at the time of happiness and most of the people blame God, when they are in distress. The last ritual custom is to cremate honourably the dead body. The dead body is to be cremated with funeral at the place of cremation.

In the Gibi Bithai author has mentioned three racial groups i.e. Mongolioid, Negritos and Nordics. The Mongolian people lived at Asia, three Nordics lived at Europe and Negritos lived at Africa. These three racial groups led by the Trinity. Sibrai (Siva) looked after Mongolioids, Barmali, (Brahma) looked after the Nordics and Vishnu looked after the Negritos. Along with these racial groups various names of places origin and derivation also come up. Such as the word Mongol or Mongolia is derived from Munggwla; i.e. the term Europe is also derived from the harwphw or arwphw and from the zamphriga the derivation of word Africa is said to be achieved.

On the other hand assimilation of various Gods and Goddesses is also seen in the narrative verse. The mythical gods Brahma, Vishnu and Moheswara are the trinity of Hinduism. The Indra and Jama are also seen as prominent Gods. Brahma is the creator, Vishnu the preserver and Moheswara is the destroyer. There is a saying equivalent of the Hindu trinity like this.

"rang rasi maithai hazi
bari gangtham,"
nwng sase anw

phana phantham."

English rendering- rang rasi maithai hazi, bari gangtham, you are alone but three fold. According to the author of the verse Brahma looks after the happy part of life and Vishnu keeping bright of human life. Bari gangtham, see the three stages of life i.e., alive, before birth and after death.

Proverb is one of the branches of folk literature. It is as old as human being. The proverbs incorporated in the Gibi Bithai can be divided into the following categories-

(i) On life cycle.
(ii) On behaviour.
(iii) On God and Goddess.

Saying also got place in various chapters of Gibi Bithai. These sayings make the verse very valuable one. Some of the very frequently used sayings related to religion are as given bellow -

"sijouni siria siriba

bathouni bandwa mwnba"

"thaigirni khonga khongba

boroni acarabw mwnba"

(Chapter - I,St.-II, G.B.)

Author used the traditional sayings as it is. But in case of Bathouni Bandwa Bandwba is not seen similar to Dhuparam Basumatary. He has explained the meaning as "Bathou alter also rounded by five splits bamboo."
But the author has seen deep meaning in the saying. According to him God rules by five deeds i.e. birth, death, union or marriage, fortune and misfortune are the five great mysterious and tractible in works of God. Apart from the sayings, the two traditional religious festivals Kherai and Garza, and the mantras found place in Gibi Bithai. The Kherai mantra is divided into two halves - one is baosali fosongnai mantra (altar preparation mantra) and another one is kherainai mantra (Prayer respecting the God and Goddess). Bhuben Narzi said the baosali phosongnai mantra as bathou zagainai mantra. The example of baosali phosongnai mantra is as following-

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  hazw khoroni ha gwthar lananwi
  dwisa zizirini dwi gwzwng lananwi
  nwngswrkhou baonswsi zwngywnwi
  sreng sreng laizam gwthar bonanwi
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(Chapter -XXIII, St. -1256 G.B.)

English rendering:

Sacred soil from the peak of hill, taking bright water of a rivulet; we shall pray you.

The Kherainai mantra starts when all the preparation of altar is finished. The Oza start to enchant mantras lord Bathou as well as other god and goddess as follows -

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  aham de! swithwni mwdai
  swrgwao dong Bathoubrai
  kailasao dong nwng Sibrai
  cibrui nwng lwgwaohai.
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(Chapter-XXXIII, St.-1261 G.B.)

English rendering:

Oh! You God of truth in heaven lies the Bathoubrai, in Kailash lies Sibrai along with Sibrui.

\[\text{hayao dong thulunsi gwthara} \]
\[\text{beniphrai raobw geithara} \]
\[\text{raokhoubw nuhura khwnaya} \]
\[\text{raokhoubw mithimwnlia.} \]

(Chapter- XXXIII, St. 1262)

English rendering:

Holy thultunsi lies on earth, nobody is left, nobody seen and hear nobody is known.

\[\text{khwnasong khwnasong nwng khwnasong} \]
\[\text{khwna suna nwng mwzangywi khwnasong} \]
\[\text{lama dothani bongphang mugasong} \]
\[\text{angni bathrakhhou ese khwnasong.} \]

(Ch – XXXIII, St. 1263)

English rendering:

Listen, listen you listen very attentively you listen, Oh! Lay man on the way you listen what I am going to say you listen.
Apha thwidwng aapakhou gardwng
Aai thwidwng aaikhou gardwng
Bathoubrai aapakhou theobw
garakhwi zwng baonw dabw.

English rendering:

My father died and I have removed him to the cremation ground, my mother died and I had removed her to the cremation ground but we have not given up the worship of Bathoubrai, the supreme king above us.

In the Gibi Bithai, 18 types of Garza are mentioned through mantra. The names of Bathou, Sibrai and Sibrui are cited at first after which only the names like zekhai brai, Khobai brai, Asu mainao, zwmwn brai, zwmwn brui and cited. Magical power is found in the heroic exploits of the various Gods in the Gibi Bithai. Sibrai has displayed his magical power by taking the form of a pig to behold soil from bottom. Budaru took the form of Khusia, Khwila took the form of a tortoise. The magic of Sibrai is seen in the chapter Kherainai where he appeared as Mongoloid beggar.

In Gibi Bithai author has used the traditional textural features in the various chapters of the verse. Meter, rhymes and alliteration are effectively used found in Gibi Bithai. Among the metrical patterns chabi, dulari and khusumala are used by the author. The author has used in writing various rhyme such as masculine rhyme, feminine rhyme, multiple rhyme, rhyme riche and rhyming couplet or payer. Alliteration of phoneme is also used by the author to create noble situation in the verse.
Kherai and Garza are two religious festivals of Bodos. Kherai is festival based on agriculture. Garza puza, according to K. Brahma is celebrated to expelled some evil gods from the area of a village. In Gibi Bithai author has recounted the mythical narrative of Kherai and mantras of Kherai. Only the mantras of Garza puja are incanted in the verse. From the mantras the various type of Garza are mentioned and different gods and goddess also appeared.

Bathou is a traditional religion of Bodos. The Bodos believe Bathoubrai as the main god. He is symbolised with euphorbia tree, which has five edges and could survive anywhere. Bathoubrai has controlled this universe through five grips and these are creation, destruction, preservation fortune and misfortune. These are five great mysterious works of Bathou god. In Gibi Bithai author has explained these five grips, which are discussed as Bandwse (one fold of life), bandwnwi (two fold of life), bandwtham (three fold of life), bandwbrwi (four fold of life) and bandwba (fivefold of life). Along with the Bathouism in the verse we could find the Hindu Gods and Goddess. The Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara are the trinity of Hinduism.

These are creator, preserver deities. Rangrasi, maithaihazi and barigangtham, of Bathouism are treated equal to Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara.

The philosophy of Bathouism is that Bathou with these first five elements - sun, sky, water, air and soil. With this five elements god created man and animals in the world. The life of human being has to follow bandwba (five principles of god). These five principles are birth, marriage, joyful and death. There are rules which are called fongba in Bodo, and there are asarba means five customs to do deeds. The bandwba is compared with a boat and asarba is compared with oars. It means to cross a river a boat and oar is need. So life has a purpose i.e. to achieve the abode, by doing according to prescribe ways of God. Because soul is not perisible only the human body is parished.
The *Gibi Bithai* of Bihuram Boro also tried to establish fact that the Bodos were not animist. The Bodos believe in one supreme God, who is the creator and protector of the world. He is known as Bathoubrai, traditionally among the Bodos. The Bodos being a primitive tribe of Assam have contact with Aryan people also. So they are in very close contact with their faith, beliefs and custom. In *Gibi Bithai*, some Hindu Gods and Goddess also have found place. Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara who are known as trinity Hindu pantheon appeared as representative of Bathou. Brahma is called *Barmali* or *Ranrasi*, Bishnu as *Mwithai hazi* or *Laokhar Gosai* and Maheswara as *Sibrai* or *Barigangtham*. So *Gibi Bithai* is a verse where the various gods of Bathouism and Hinduism have found their place.

The *Gibi Bithai* of Bihuram Boro is a pioneer work for Bodo community. This long narrative verse is treated as the first epic in Bodo literature. So he is known as first creator of Bodo epic. Again he is the chief editor of *Bonzar* weekly newspaper. This paper is published for the first time in 7th February, 1973 from Udalguri. This weekly newspaper is known as first among the Bodos. Bihuram Boro also invented new process in last 19th century to bring unity among the Bodos. He criticized *Boli Pratha* (killing animals in the name of God and Goddess) and taught God that we can satisfy the god by giving flowers and playing *Kham, Siphung* and *Zotha*. This is a very simple ways of praying the God.

Thus *Gibi Bithai* gives us information regarding Bathou religion which is a traditional religion of Bodos. At the same time connection between Hindu mythology and Bathouism is also found in the verse. The Bodo custom, faith and belief and fair and festival of Bodos have also been dealt at length in the *Gibi Bithai*. 
References:

1. Dhuparam Basumatary, *Boro Kachari Sanskritir Kinsit Abhash*. p-15
4. Dr. K. Brahma. *op-cit.* p-117