

INTRODUCTION

0.1. The *Bibar*, first Bodo Journal, published in 1920A.D. brought a significant change of the Bodo literature heralding a new era of Bodo prose or poetry. After that, another magazine namely *The Bodo* published in 1953 A.D. worked as the platform for some modern forms of Bodo literature like short story. Ishan Mushahary is the first short story writer in Bodo and his first story appeared in the journal *Hathorkhi Hala* in the year 1930A.D. On the other hand, *The Bodo* souvenir (1953 A.D.) is the first platform of the modern Bodo short story. Before 1930 A.D. there was only a few short stories in Bodo literature due to lack of proper materials as the Bodo society at that time was backward in economy, education and in other fields due to many reasons. As the Bodo society is a part of rural Assam, no significant development was seen in the rural Assam in general before independence. After independence, the Bodo dominated areas of Assam also developed a little alongwith the other areas of Assam. The agricultural-based society gradually started to witness some kind of economic development particularly in the district Head Quarters like Kokrajhar and in some small towns like Bijni, Udalguri, Tongla, Dudhnoi, Routa, etc. after 1947 A.D. A group of Govt. service holder people from the Bodo Community formed the basis of the Bodo middle class, which felt the need for nurturing the modern Bodo literature and culture from their own point of view. Rupnath Brahma, Satish Ch. Basumatary, Darendra Basumatary, Prasenjit Brahma etc. are the prominent Bodo middle class writers and cultural activists. But after the successive Bodo mass movements in 1980's, for the rights to self-determination the area in question witnessed some significant development as to the language, literature and political awareness etc. In the field of urbanisation, establishment of more higher educational institutions and small scale industries, development in communication, expansion in female education in particular and literary growth in general, growth of Bodo language etc. all these factors created a proper social atmosphere with vigorous materials for writings modern short stories. The Bodo accord in 1993 A.D. is also a notable historical

event in the history of Bodo area and society. A host of new writers came out with new attitudes and new themes and forms what was reflected in the Bodo short stories. As the inception day of Bodo Sahitya Sabha, the 16th November, 1952 A.D. is recognized as the beginning of a new era in Bodo literature, and based on the formation of Bodo Sahitya Sabha according to some critics, we have two major groups of Bodo story writers— one is old group and the other is new group. The old group of writers includes Ishan Mushahary, Jiten Brahma, Satish Ch. Basumatary, Ajit Narayan Brahma, Madaram Brahma, etc. The modern story writers, who belong to modern group are Chittaranjan Mushahary, Nil Kamal Brahma, Manoranjan Lahary, Haribhusan Brahma, Nandeswar Daimary, Janil Kumar Brahma, Zumai Dala Basumatary, Kathindra Swargiary, Nabin Malla Boro, Indramalati Narzary, Gobinda Basumatary, Sunil Phukan Basumatary, U. G. Brahma and many more. In our present study we have selected some Bodo short story writers in general taking from both groups. The old group short story writers was not successful in writing perfect stories and most of them were like folk tales. The Assamese or other regional stories of the early period were also like tales. Their themes were based mainly on social reforms and traditional cultural life of the Bodo people. The forms of stories were very simple as like as some of the early stories of Assamese literature.

The modern short stories have a great difference with old one in many respects as to art and technique, style and language, themes, characterisations and even in the presentation of the contemporary society. In the earlier period of modern short stories (1952 A.D. -1970 A.D.) before the publication of short story collection in 1970 A.D., mainly Maikel Basumatry, Daniram Basumatary, Jagadish Brahma, Prasenjit Brahma, Leela Brahma, Jamuna Brahma, Siken Brahma, Lakeswar Brahma, Ranjit Kumar Borgoyary etc. are the notable story writers whose stories appeared in the journal *The Bodo* and in other journals after 1952 A.D. It is to be noted that Chittaranjan Mushahary's *Phwimal Mijing*, published in 1970 A.D. is the first Bodo story collection. We have a good number of modern short story writers in Bodo literature namely Nil Kamal Brahma, Manoranjan Lahary, Haribhusan Brahma, Dharanidhar Wary, Nandeswar Daimary etc. also belonging

to the middle stage of Modern Age period particularly since 1970's, and then another group of story writers like Janil Kumar Brahma, Jumai Dala Basumatary, Kathindra Swargiary, Nabin Malla Boro, Indramalati Narzary, Gobinda Basumatary, Sunil Phukan Basumatary, U. G. Brahma etc., who belong to the late Modern Age period particularly up to 1990's. It is noted that since 1990s, the subject matter, technique, style, use of language, characterization, expression etc. of the Bodo short story have gradually been changing in Bodo short stories with respect to the corresponding changing of Bodo society and its people as mentioned earlier. In the modern period of Bodo literature the condition of economy, education, politics and socio-culture of Assam in general and Bodo areas in particular underwent many changes. So, new themes like love for mother tongue, unemployment problem, Bodo political movement, insurgency problem, law and order subjects like murder, kidnapping, rape, communal riots etc. became focal points of the modern Bodo short stories. After 1983A.D. new themes like alienation, new man-woman relationship, feminism etc. also started to influence the new group of Bodo short story writers. These are the impact of globalisation, market economy and new political changes and structures in the B.T.C. areas in specific and Assam in general. Some new modern short story writers have picked up these themes in their short stories. As for example, Nil Kamal Brahma is regarded as the greatest short story writer in Bodo. Besides his edited short story collection, *Phungkha* and his own published short story collections are *Hagra Guduni Mwi*, *Silingkhar*, *Sirinay Mandar*, *Sakhondra* and *Mem Daodwi*. His stories bear high technique of writing, characterisation, narrative art, talented style and language. In his 'Mem Daodwi', he satirises the growing Bodo urban society. In 'Silingkhar', he portrays the tragic life of a modern educated person. His stories present different social problems and life of Bodo modern society. Secondly, Manoranjan Lahary is another great story writer who is also a critic, poet, novelist and historian of the Bodo literature. His great contributions to Bodo short story are story collections like *Solo Bidang*, *Bajwi* and *Gaodang*. His good technique of plot construction and characterisation and use of language are built as to the different themes. One of his famous stories 'Koling Bel' depicts the peculiar psychology of an office head clerk; again a new

theme of sex is expressed in his story 'Khanjana' and 'Dehani Bagwi'. Moreover, Harbhusan Brahma's *Srimathi Durlai*, *Rwnao Phagla* and *Khiphi Bendwng*, Nandeswar Daimary's *Boxing* and *Thangnaini Daoha*, Sahitya Academi award-winning writer Janil Kumar Brahma's *Dhumphaoni Phita*, *Mwider Muhuni* and *Japanni Swima*, Sahitya Academi award-winning writer Kathindra Swargiary's *Hongla Pøndit*, Rangsar award-winning writer Zumai Dala Basumatary's *Haibridni Mwdwi Arw Gwlwmdwi*, Nabin Malla Boro's *Gwsw Phajarini Bibar* and *Hadan*, Indramalati Narzary's *Angni Mwjang Mwnnaini Dairy* and *Gaodang* and Sunil Phukan Basumatary's *Post Modernni Song Dannanwi* etc. also are the other important modern Bodo short story collections and these group of modern authors have also experimented with different themes, characterisation, style, language and expression. Among all these writers, ten short story writers from the different four ages of the Bodo literature-inception or pre-modern, the early Modern Age, the middle stage of Modern Age and the late Modern Age have been selected in my present proposed research work. The select authors are regarded by critics as the important story writers belonging to different literary periods in the history of Bodo short story.

0.2. Organisation of the Study:

The organisation of present research study is divided into the following chapters. These are –

Introduction.

1. Chapter -I : Bodo Society: Growth and Development.
2. Chapter-II: Bodo Short Story: A Historical View.
3. Chapter-III : Society as Reflected in Bodo Short Stories.
4. Chapter-IV : Plot in Bodo Short Stories,
5. Chapter- V : Characterisation in Bodo Short Stories,
6. Chapter-VI : Theme and Technique in Bodo Short Stories.
7. Chapter-VII : Style and Expression in Bodo Short Stories.

Conclusion.

The proposed research work is organised into seven chapters with Introduction and Conclusion, excluding the bibliography. In the **Introduction**, there are synopsis of the topic of study, Organisation of the study, Aims and Objectives, Research proposal and its importance, Demography, Methodology, Sources of study and Justification of the topic.

First chapter **Bodo Society: Growth and Development** contains Introduction and Background of Bodo Society: Racial background, Historical background, Socio-cultural background, Socio-economic background, Socio-educational background and Growth and Development of Bodo Society: Socio-Culture, Economic, Education, Political, Trade and Commerce, Transport and Communication, and Conclusion.

The second chapter **Bodo Short Stories: A Historical View** contains Introduction, Background of Bodo language, Background of Bodo Literature, A Historical View of Bodo Short Stories and Conclusion.

The third chapter **Society Reflected in Bodo Short Stories** contains Introduction, society and Social picture reflected in Bodo short stories and Conclusion.

The fourth chapter **Plot in Bodo short stories** contains Introduction, Plot in Bodo short stories and Conclusion.

The fifth chapter **Characterisation in Bodo short stories** contains Introduction, characterisation in Bodo short stories and Conclusion.

The sixth chapter **Theme and Technique in Bodo short stories** contains Introduction, theme in Bodo short stories, technique in Bodo short stories and Conclusion.

In the seventh chapter **Style and Expression in Bodo short stories** we have contained Introduction, Style in Bodo short stories, expression in Bodo short stories and Conclusion.

The **conclusion** is comprised of summing up of chapters, findings of the study and future scope of study.

0.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

Both the pre-independence and post-independence era in Bodo society has a great sociological importance in Assam in general and Bodo areas in particular. The social background of the period will be necessary for the proper evaluation of the Bodo short story writers in question. Our important aim is to make an effort to bring out social forces as background of the modern Bodo short stories. However, our main aim is to make an objective and critical analysis of the select short stories of both old and modern groups of the Bodo short story writers.

- 1) The primary objective of the research work is to make an indepth study of the Bodo short stories critically in reference to the ten selected authors.
- 2) The secondary objective of the research work is to study the Bodo society and its background in reference to a comprehensive study of the growth and development of the Bodo short stories in general.

0.4 RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND ITS IMPORTANCE:

The proposal of my research study is **Bodo short stories: A Critical study**. It is a part of Bodo literature and society. The research plan is to explore into the study of Bodo short stories in the context of Bodo society and fictional literary art and its elements. In this research plan it is attempted to give an analytical study of Bodo short stories and the social aspects of Bodo society. It is attempted to study objectively the data in reference collected from primary and secondary sources. In this study it is planned to make a systematic critical analysis of Bodo short stories and its elements in relation to Bodo society.

The critical study of Bodo short stories and its literary and social aspects has an immense value and significance. As the present research plan is attempted to bring out the fictional literary art, techniques and its elements, and social aspects of the Bodos, so this critical study of Bodo short stories and its social aspects have a great social value and importance towards our contemporary society and writers. It will greatly contribute to the development of Bodo criticism and culture in particular and Bodo short story in general. It will help the readers and scholars in the study of the Bodo fictional literary art and social life.

0.5 DEMOGRAPHY:

The Bodos are one of the most important races in the North East India who have been living in the scattered places in the states of Assam, Tripura, Nagaland, Arunachal, Meghalaya, Manipur and Mizoram since ancient times. They are also to be found in West Bengal. There are traces of small pocket areas of origin Bodos even in Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan, who have undergone some changes due to local influences there.

The main concentrated areas of the Bodo people in Assam are North and Eastern part of Dhubri district, the whole area of the Kokrajhar district, Chirang district, Baksa district and Udalguri district, Northern part of Bongaigaon district, Barpeta and Nalbari district, Guwahati sub-division in Kamrup district, the whole of Northern part of Mangaldai in Darrang district, Tezpur sub-division and Northern part of Sanitpur district, Northern part of North Lakhimpur, Northern part of the Dhemaji district in the Northern part of the Brahmaputra valley of Assam.

In the southern part of the Brahmaputra valley of Assam they are concentrated in Dudhnoi-Dhupdhara areas in the southern part of Goalpara district, Dhupdhara-Boko-Chayyagaon areas, Chayyagaon-Rani areas and South Guwahati-Sonapur-Khetri areas in the southern part of Kamrup district, Jagirod and Rupohi-Dhing areas in Nogaon district, Morigaon in Morigaon district, southern most part of the Golaghat district, North Eastern part of Dibrugarh district, Howraghat-Langhin areas of Karbi Anglong district.

In present situation Bodoland Territorial Council has been created for the safeguard of the Bodos. After the great mass movement of the Bodos for self-rights and other demands, a memorandum of settlement known as the historic 'Bodo Accord' was signed between the Central govt. and A.B.S.U- B.P.A.C. leaders in Guwahati on 20th February, 1993 A.D. The objective of this accord was to provide maximum autonomy within the framework of the Indian constitution to the Bodos for social, economic, education, ethnic and cultural development through the creation of a administrative set up on the north bank of the Brahmaputra with the name and style 'Bodoland Autonomous council (B.A.C.)'. Even after that the Bodo leaders were not satisfied with the creation of B.A.C., and agitated again for the

creation for a separate state of Bodoland. They continued the demand and agitated for the separate state. Even some insurgency groups like N.D.F.B., B.L.T. etc. demanded for a separate land or state. On 10th February, 2003 A.D. the formation of Bodoland Territorial Council (B.T.C.) with four districts was declared by the Central Government after an agreement with the B.L.T. leaders. The Bodoland liberation Tiger (B.L.T.) laid down their arms to the Govt. in return and all of them returned to the political leadership of the Bodoland Territorial Administrative Districts, i.e. B.T.A.D. within the state of Assam.

The Bodoland Territorial council consists of four districts, namely Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri. The BTC area falls between 26.7'12" to 26.47'.50" N latitude and 89.47'40" to 92.18'30" E longitude. As per Census report of 2001, the total population of Bodoland area is 29.01 lakh. The percentage of Tribal population(ST) in Bodoland area is about 52% of total population of Assam.¹ They are fairly spread in the Brahmaputra valley in general and thickly populated in Bodoland area in particular in the districts of Kokrajhar, Chirang, Baksa and Udalguri and even in Darrang district. Even after the formation of the B.T.A.D. in 2003 A.D., the Bodo people are still fighting for a separate state bifurcating Assam under the leadership of many student and political organisations like A.B.S.U., B.N.C., P.C. D.R.

2. METHODOLOGY:

In the proposed research work both primary and secondary data will be required. For the collection of primary data, the different sources will be field work, Govt. records, and text-books of the selected Bodo story writers. The Govt. records are to be collected from B.T.C., a local Govt. under the VIth schedule of the Indian constitution and State Govt. as well. To collect data from fieldwork, interviews will be organised with the writers who are still writing— Gobinda Basumatary, Haribhusan Brahma, Janil Kumar Brahma, Ranjit Kumar Borgoyary and Jamuna Brahma and also with other writers, intellectuals and social workers. For this a questionnaire will also be provided to the concerned persons. For the collection of Secondary data the main sources will be critical books on the selected authors,

Bodo literature and other books as well. For this purpose different libraries like Gauhati University, Dibrugarh University, Bodoland University, Kokrajhar District Library etc. will be visited.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Since the inception of the Bodo short story it is a matter of great concern that no specific and significant research work has been done on the Bodo short stories. Before this work was undertaken no research scholars undertook any research on the Bodo short stories in specific. When my research work was going on only two other research scholars started research work on Bodo short stories on particular fields, but those have not been successfully completed yet. Bijitgiri Basumatary is one of these two who has been researching on '**Social Aspects of Boro Short Stories: A Critical Study**' (from 1970 A.D. to 2002 A.D.) which is yet to be completed. Not only research in universities, but also any other renowned writers have not studied critically and specifically on the Bodo short stories where we can have detailed and all aspects of the Bodo short stories. Only some Bodo writers have written some articles which can't provide sufficient information on the subject. Anil Boro, Rakhao Basumatary, Umesh Brahma and Uthrisar Khungur Basumatary are notable among them. Some Bodo literary historians also have provided some information and brief observations in this field, but those are part of only historical records of literature. They are Madhuram Boro, Manoranjan Lahary, Riju Kumar Brahma and lastly Rakhao Basumatary. In the field of Bodo literature the years '1990' A.D. and '1991' A.D. respectively are very significant for the publication of two books on the history of the same by eminent Bodo writers Madhuram Boro and Manoranjan Lahary respectively. Madhuram Boro highlights the themes and subjects of some short stories in his literary history book called *The History of Bodo Literature* in 1990 A.D. After him, a renowned Bodo writer and critic, Manoranjan Lahary has also observed the trends in this field and has recorded his views on the trends of some story collections and story writers like Nil Kamal Brahma, Haribhusan Brahma etc. in his literary history book *Boro Thunlaini Jarimin*. Anil Kumar Brahma's *Boro Sungdo Soloni Bithun* gives a

general information on short story and some observations on some popular Bodo short stories and writers and he has also listed a chronology of Bodo story writers with their collections. These contributions made so far are not enough for a total understanding and critical appreciation of the Bodo short stories. Keeping in view the scarcity of specific and exclusive studies in Bodo short stories, this present study on **BODO SHORT STORIES: A CRITICAL STUDY** have been taken up by me in order to make a comprehensive and in depth study of the same covering all aspects of short stories as an art in reference to the Bodo short stories from the beginning to the present times.

4. JUSTIFICATION:

In this research topic **BODO SHORT STORIES: A CRITICAL STUDY** it covers the short story period from beginning to the modern period (till 2012A.D.). Out of a big period of about a half century with a good number of story writers, in this research work only ten Bodo short story writers have been selected as because their short stories represent the different literary trends of the different periods and social aspects of the Bodo short stories. They have been selected keeping in view the different periods/ages and literary trends of the Bodo short story as represented by their short stories. Among them there is one woman story writer also. In other words, they are representatives of the different ages and trends of the Bodo short story from the beginning to the modern time.

Ishan Mushahary is the first Bodo short story writer in standard form as said by renowned literary historian Manoranjan Lahary before the Independence of India and also before the starting of modern Bodo literature. He is the lone story writer of the pre-modern period or Old Age period who has been selected in our study. It is to be noted that for a long period of 17 years no story books were published in Bodo literature from 1952 A.D. to 1969 A.D. that is nearly two decades in between 1960s and 1970s. In this long period the Bodo short stories were published in different magazines and journals only. Among the short story writers of the journal period four important story writers have been selected in our study who represent the trends of that period. They are Prasenjit Brahma and Jagadish

Brahma who belongs to the beginning period of Bodo modern short stories or early Modern Age period and the other two writers Ranjit Kumar Borgoyary and Jamuna Brahma belong to the middle stage of Modern Age and late Modern Age period of Bodo modern short stories respectively.

After a long time, the short story collection *Phwimal Mijing* written by Chittaranjan Mushahary was published in 1970 A.D. which is also a significant literary event in the history of Bodo short story. It is the first story book collection published in Bodo literature. From the first publication of story collection it is regarded as the beginning of middle stage of Modern Age in the history of the Bodo short stories and it continues till the publication of Haribhusan Brahma's *Khiphi Bendwng* (2012 A.D.). From this period, we have selected authors with own collections of stories like Nil Kamal Brahma, Manoranjan Lahary, Haribhusan Brahma, Gobinda Basumatary and Janil Kumar Brahma respectively in our study.

In our study ten Bodo story writers from the beginning of the short story (1932 A.D.) to the present times 2012 A.D.) have been selected for our present study keeping in view the trends of short stories and publications of anthologies of short story and different periods as stated above. Finally they are Ishan Mushahary, Prasenjit Brahma, Jagadish Brahma, Nil Kamal Brahma, Manoranjan Lahary, Haribhusan Brahma, Ranjit Kumar Borgoyary, Gobinda Basumatary, Janil Kumar Brahma and Jamuna Brahma. Again I repeat, there have been picked up ten authors from the four different ages of the history of the Bodo short story. I have done so because it will help us in finding the gradual development of the Bodo short story for a comprehensive study as to the contents and forms of the concerned authors.

Reference :

1. Census Report, 2001