CHAPTER- II

NEO-VAISHNAVISM AND ITS IMPACT ON BODO ORAL LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

Oral Literature is the most important genre of folklore. R.M Dorson says "it is also called verbal arts or expressive literature. Under this rubric fall spoken, sung, and voiced forms of traditional utterances that shows repetitive patterns. One large sub-division is folk narrative, which in turn has its own manifold distinctions. Another major sub-division is folk song or folk poetry, with its own family of related species. Traditional tales and songs correspond to the written productions of novelists and poets, but they circulated by word of mouth and without known authorship. They may be short anecdotes and rhymes or elaborate romances and epics. Certain brief genres of oral expression are classed as proverbs and riddles."¹

The Bodo and Assamese oral literature also are circulated by words of mouth which includes the folk narratives or tales and songs. It also includes the proverbs, riddles and charms. There are some tales that are found in both the communities with some variations. The neo-

vaishnavite Bodo people sing various kinds of Assamese folk song associated with the seasonal and agricultural ceremonies and festivals, songs associated with the rite de passage, songs related to rituals and prayers etc.

Whatever it may be oral or folk literature of both the communities can be classified into the following sub-categories:

1. Prose narratives
2. Folksongs
3. Proverbs
4. Riddles
5. Folk Speech

II. 1. Prose Narratives

Prose narratives are one kind of traditional tales which are shaped and carried by the different groups of people from generation to generation. According to Bascom “prose narrative is an appropriate term for the widespread and important category of verbal art which include myths, legends and folk tales.”

There are some ethnic terms to indicate the prose narratives in Bodo. The first Bodo folk tales collector S.Endle used the ethnic term

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*khourang* to suggest the meaning of a tale.³ Some scholars like P.Goswami, P Bhattacharya, Bhaben Narzee, M.Brahma and many others have used the term *colo batha* to suggest the meaning of folktale or prose narrative. N.C Sarmah has used the ethnic terms like *mith, cubung colo* and *colo* respectively to suggest the meaning of myth, legend and tale. This is the first ever academic and scientific attempt to make typological classification of Bodo prose narratives on folkloristic line.⁴ Dr Anil Boro has rightly used the term to denote the ethnic term like *gozam colo, cubung colo* and *colo or colo batha* to denote the meaning of myth, legend and tale.⁵ He has classified the Bodo folk literatures in his research work entitled “Folk Literature of Bodos: An Introduction” into four genres are -Folk songs (*Khuga methay*) (b). Traditional narratives (*colo batha or cubung colo*) (c). Proverbs and proverbial sayings (*bathranibhao*) (d). Riddles (*Distan*).⁶

A. Myth

Myth is one of the important genres of oral literature which can be defined as a story presented as having occurred in a previous age explaining the cosmological and supernatural traditions of a people, their gods, heroes, cultural, traits, religious beliefs etc. Anil Boro says

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⁵ Ibid, p-167
⁶ Ibid, p42
"the Bodos or Bodo Kacharis have a good stock of such myths explaining their cosmological and religious traditions, their God and Goddesses and their musical instruments. The Bodos, like other tribal groups of north east India have their own mythologies in sharp contrast to the pan Indian mythological accounts of God and Goddesses."7 Assamese is the composite society and their language, culture and traditions are also borrowed from different communities in India including tribal and non-tribal. About their myth, P.Goswami rightly observes, "The Assamese themselves possess no myth as such. What they have are derived from Sanskrit sources—the Vedas and Puranas. On the other hand tribes like Rabhas and the Kacharis—all Assamese or in some cases bilingual have myths of a kind, but impregnated by Indian traditions."8 From the field study I have not found any such kind of myth in the neo-vaishnavite Bodos of Sonitpur district. It needs mention here that though they have same myth as the main stream Bodos about the creation of earth, universe, human beings the name of heroes and heroins are of Pan Indian Hindu names like Brahma, Vishnu, Maheswar etc.; but the plot and background of the story is completely of the Bodo origin.

7 Boro, Anil, *Flute and Harp; Essay on Bodo Literature and Culture*, 2004, p-65
8 ibid, p-65
B. Legend

Legend is another branch of prose narratives. According to Lindah Degh, "the legend is related to the Marchen; it is localized down to the earth and has historic validity." Kohler says it the "archive of the pre-history of a people." Generally there are three types of legends e.g. (a) Etiological, (b) Historical and (c) Religious legend. Etiological legends tell the origin of the things or the creation of the world. Historical Legends include narratives trying to explain the pre-history of some locality or region and the hidden body of folk history. Religious legends are legend on god and heroes to our religious ritual.

Anil Boro says "the prose narratives of the Bodos are rich in the field of legendary tales. Legends current in Bodo culture may easily fit in the above sub-genres of legend." The history, origin, migration and settlement of the Bodos can be known through the prose narratives like myths, legends and tales. There are myths or mythical tales in Bodo recounting the story of creation and origin of the world and man. Apart from this mythical tale, there are some legends extant among the oral history of the Bodo kings, chieftains, Dewans, Legendary heroes and

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11. Boro, Anil, op-cited, p-180
Heroines. Interestingly the neo–vaishnavite Bodo people don’t have their legendary tales like the ones mentioned above.

i. Some Legend Associated with the Namghar

New legends associated with the neo-vaishnavite Bodo namghar are collected from the different villages or areas are the following:

There was a namghar at Dhunaguri gaon. Since 19th century, the villagers performed a bhaona yearly. The belief was current in the village that nobody can enter inside the manikut. So everyone did not enter inside the manikut. The villagers were always aware about this matter.

Generally the villagers organized a bhaona in the village namghar once a year. In spite of disallowing to enter, one of the actors of the bhaona entered inside the manikut secretly without informing anyone. He became senseless as soon as he entered. The villagers brought out him from the manikut and they tried to make him good so far as possible.

After this incident the villagers convened a general meeting and a decision was made to break the manikut and build a new manikut. As decision taken in the meeting they broke the manikut. In the same place a new manikut was being constructed observing certain rites and rituals.

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12 ibid
Immediately the villagers also performed a *nam kirtan* in favour of this man and prayed for the sound recovery of the man. But no improvement was seen. Even one of the family members suffered from mental disorder.\(^{13}\)

Another legend related to one *namghar* is prevalent in the locality. The legend goes thus; there was a very popular doctor, known as Mili doctor who belonged to Mising community. He had close contact with the people of every society. He served his duty very well in Ulubari area for about 10 years. One day they along with his family members went to *namghar* to offer a *sarai*. When they came back after offering a *sarai*, there was a big sound occurred like *Tong*. Immediately they look around and observed around the *namghar*, but nothing was found.\(^{14}\)

**ii. Anecdotes associated with the observation of Bhaona**

There is an interesting narrative associated with the performance of *bhaona* found in the 19th century from the area of Ghoramari in Sonitpur district. As informant furnished:

The Assamese people of Ghoramari area had been observing *bhaona* once a year jointly with the Bodo people. Before observing the *bhaona*, they assembled and discussed in detail as to how to make

\[^{13}\text{Ramani Boro,M,70,Ulubari,Sonitpur}\]
\[^{14}\text{ibid}\]
bhaona performance successful. Thereafter they started contributing the characters of the play between the Bodo and Assamese communities. The Bodo people were also agreed and accepted all the decisions made by the committee. Interesting one was that the Assamese people never gave the character of Krishna to the Bodo people to act in the play since the very beginning. So, the Bodo people demanded to offer to them the character of Krishna. Later, this became a matter of controversy among the organizers. The Assamese people started saying and tried to minimize the situation saying that "This character is reserved only for the Hindu Assamese society. You are not a Hindu, not an Aryan, this character belongs to only for the Aryan peoples. This hurt vehemently the heart of the simple minded tribal Bodo people. Subsequently from this year the Bodo people stopped to perform the bhaona as a whole.  

There is another narrative associated with the performance of the Bhaona which was held at Amguri village. Generally the villagers started observing Bhaona since 1950s. They used to perform various kinds of play (Bhaona) usually in the month of Phagun or Chaitra. In 1988 also, the villagers had decided and resolved not to perform any more Bhaona from this year. Some of the educated persons of the village began to think that bhaona was not part of Bodo. So they should

15 . Kamal Basumatary, M, 70, Ghoramari, Tezpur, Assam
stop performing it. They need not to spend more money and more time for this programme every year. It is the time for thinking and maintaining their culture. But few people disagreed with this decision taken by the villagers. They had believed that if they didn’t perform it, it would bring dangerous consequences in our village. in the village. But so they raised the demand that bhaona must be performed. But they did not get any positive response from the leaders of the community.

After a few days, one old man died in the village and the few people of the village started talking about the celebration of Bhaona. Again, after few days, another young boy also died in disease. Immediately the villagers got shocked and started talking, all those happened as they stopped performing bhaona. So people suggested “we should call meeting to discuss regarding this incident.” Unfortunately after few days one of the people died again. Again the villages got shocked and every villager started talking, we lost not one, not two, we lost three members of our village for the fault of the decision takers. We shouldn’t obey and tolerate their voices, we should celebrate bhaona very soon, and otherwise we will finish ourselves, this opportunity will not be given to them. However some of the villagers went to meet the Ojha to seek advice about one future events of the village. They came back and informed and requested the villagers as suggested by the Ojha
for the re-observance of *bhaona* in the village. This is the only way to save the people. Lastly at the ardent request of the villagers, the leader of the village committee had decided unanimously to celebrate the *Bhaona*. No more people died after the performance of *bhaona*.\(^{16}\)

Another narrative can be cited. As the informant furnished, there was a regrettable incident that occurred among the Bodos and neo-vaishnavite Bodos that the *douri* and musical players of the Bodo musical instruments were killed by the neo-vaishnavite Bodos at the advice and order of the *Guru* at Gereki Kachari village situated in the southern side of Tezpur town on account of unwilling to accept the faith of neo-vaishnavism. They were very expert and famous performer as well as conservative in keeping Bodo’s tradition. They raised question against the initiators and the newly converted people. As a result of conversion immediately the villagers became two parts—the follower of the neo-vaishnavism and the follower of the traditional *Bathou*. Some of the villagers didn’t like such kind of division. Lastly a few people kept trying to follow *Bathou* religion and they showed unwilling to convert into neo-vaishnavism. Consequently, the musical instruments were burnt down and even the experts of musical instruments players were killed by

\(^{16}\) Informant, Mangala Barmahalia, 58, Amguri, Silikhabari, Sonitpur, Assam
Another informant said that they hated each other. The elder brother didn’t eat any kind of things from his non initiation brothers or even his parents too.¹⁸

There are lots of beliefs associated with the worshipping of their traditional worships like Kherai and Garja in the Bodo society. If they stop the animal sacrifice in the worship, something might happen in the society. The deities could do harm for them. Some of the Bodo villages or families are maintaining their age old traditional way of worshiping god. For example, the people of Shengahali village are still maintaining their tradition. The people are still sacrificing many animals in the name of god and goddesses during the traditional worship. They don’t want to stop it. They have firm belief that they cannot stop animal sacrifices. It needs mention here that the people of the same village are semi-neo-vaishnavite too. Last 25 years they performed ras bhaona. On the other hand they still perform kherai worship and animal sacrifice is also going on. “If they stop animal sacrifice, there may occur bad events. Even some members of the village that their village was completely

¹⁷ Informant: Jadab Chandra Swargiyari, M, 68, Chitralekha Nagar, Tezpur, Sonitpur
¹⁸ Informant: Kanak Chandra Boro, M, 70, Borpukhuri
devastated after they refused to offer the sacrifice in kherai worship."19 So, they don’t want to stop it for the safety of the villagers. It needs mention here that even some aged and educated people also prefer the tradition of sacrifice. But the educated young generation of the village doesn’t prefer this tradition; they prefer Bibar Bathou instead of sacrifice.

C. Tales

Like myth, legend, tale is also another branch of prose narrative. Tales are the creation of unknown people and it is handed down from generation to generation by worth of mouth. According to Bascom “tales are fiction pure and simple, devised not to instruct and edify the listener, but only to amuse him. They belong to the region of pure romance.”20 Amongst scholars of Bodo oral folklore Anil Boro has rightly used the ethnic term Colo or Colo Batha to denote the meaning of a tale.21 On the other hand P.Goswami used the term sadhu or sadhu katha to denote the meaning of a tale in Assamese.22

The Bodos are very rich in respect of folk tales. There are many types of Bodo folktales classified by different scholars. P.Goswami and M.Brahma classified into four types-(i) Wonder Tales (gomothao

19 Informant, Sumeswar Basumatari, 64, Shengahiloi, Sonitpur, Assam
20 W.R Bascom, Contribution to Folkloristics, p-119
22 P. Goswami, Ballad and Tales of Assam, 1970, p-80
(ii) Etiological tales (phormaynay colo) (iii) Moral tales (Bocon colo) and (iv) Trickster tales (cian zamba colo). According to Anil Boro, the types of folktales in Bodo are-i. Animal tales (zunatni colo), ii. Supernatural or wonderous tales (Gomothao colo) iii. Jokes or Humorous tales (Zongkhaynay eba minisri colo) iv. Tricksters tales (Cian zamba colo) (v) Cumulative tales (banglangara colo) (vi) tales of Folk History (Subung jarimainari), (Vii) Dilemma tales (Zetho Gonang) and (Viii) Incestuous tales (Bunghthaoyai colo). On the other hand, the Assamese folktales are classified into five sub types by the renowned folklorist P. Goswami. These are-(i). Animal tales, (ii). Supernatural tales (iii). Jokes or Humorous tales (iv) Tricksters tales (v) Cumulative tales.

Whatever it may be, the present study is on the impact of Assamese folktales on the Bodo society especially in the Sonitpur district. It is very difficult to study the influence of Assamese folktales on the Bodos. Though Assamese is the composite society, the neo-vaishnavite Assamese speaking people are generally known as Assamese. Actually, all those who are living in Assam are regarded as the Assamese; practically this is not true. There is tremendous controversy about the term Assamese.

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23 P. Goswami, Boro Kachari Colo, 1972
24 Anil Boro, op cit., p-189
25 P. Goswami, op cit., pp-83-84
of the parts of it. It is needless to say that the contribution of tribal language and folklore can not be ignored the formation of Assamese society. According to Binod Basumatari, “those tales are claimed as the Assamese folktales by the Assamese people these are completely not Assamese folktales.” If we see through the logical point of view this is partially true. Laksminath Bezbaruah did the pioneering work of Assamese folktales by collecting and publishing the book entitled *Buri air Sadhu*. Some scholars are of the view that there are lots of tribal folktales included in the tale collection and now these folktales are recognized as the folktales of the Assamese people. It is also true that there are ample chances of influence in respect of folklore materials as both the communities and live side by side as well as in the same region.

For example, the tales of an old man and fox is also available in the Bodo society in Sonitpur district. According to this folktale, one day an old man is planting arum. A fox comes and advises the man to plant arum after roasting and packing with plantain leaves. The old man does so. The fox with his companions comes at night and steals all the bundles of roasted arum. After few days, the old man went to see the plant whether the arum is grown or not. He started checking the plant arum one by one; unfortunately the old man touches the excrement of

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26 Informant: Binod Basumatari, a teacher and critic, M, 52, Chengiliamara, Baliapara, Tezpur
the fox only. He gets angry and thinks to take revenge against them. As he thinks, he tells his wife to cry so that the foxes can hear and think that the old man is dead. They do so; the fox comes there and want to see the kind hearted old man’s dead body. The old woman permits them to enter into the room one by one. Then the foxes enter and the door of the room is closed tightly and the old man who is on the bed pretending death gets up immediately and beats them to death with stick.27

Another folktale is the tale of Tejimola. It is a supernatural tale with a theme of step mother’s cruel attitude towards her step child. There was a merchant; after his wife death he marries another woman. The merchant had a daughter from his first wife and his daughter was expert in weaving. She knew how to weave jalisola for his father. The merchant always used cloth woven by his daughter only. The new wife i.e. the step mother of the girl couldn’t tolerate it. One day the merchant goes abroad. The stepmother goes to collect weaving equipment, a weaving needle is taken and pierced on her head and mutters go and be a common maina.” The girl transforms to a common maina.

The above mentioned tales are not available in the collected books of P.Goswami’s the Bodo Kachari Folktales and other collection of Bodo tales. The versions are locally available among the neo-

\[27\text{Ibid}\]
vaishnavite Bodos of Sonitpur. It might be the influence of Assamese tales.

II. 2. Folk Song

Folksong is one of the important genres of folk-literature. Folk songs are those songs that are transmitted, handed down from one generation to another generation. Richmond says “folk songs concentrates on a single episode, develops their stories dramatically and are impersonal in their approach to subject matter.”

In the Bodo society also there is good store house of folk song. Mohini Mahan Brahma, in his collected book namely ‘Folk Songs of the Bodos’ classified Bodo folk song into 9 (nine) sub-divisions-(a) Patriotism and Valour, (b) Songs of Soil, (c) Nursery Rhyme, (d) The Course of Love, (e) Hymeneal Avenue, (f) Gift of Humour, (g) Bihu song and (h) Ritual, Prayer and Philosophy. Among these scholars Anil Boro did tremendous work on the Bodo folk literature and also classified the Bodo folk song into (a) Songs connected with seasonal and agricultural ceremonies and festivals,(b) Songs associated with rites-de-passage,(c) Songs related to rituals and prayer, (iv) Incantation (monthor),(v) Songs connected with the philosophical idea (Baidachi

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28 W.R. Richmond, in Dorson, 1981, p-86
carinay methai) (vi) Love songs (Goco thonai methay) and (vii) Ballad (Zoholao methay). 29

Under the influence of neo-vaishnavism there can be seen in the folklore of the district a tremendous change, especially among the Bodo people in particular. It is universal truth that the coming of neo-vaishnavism brought about a change in the religious thought and practices in Assam and it created a religious folklore.

A. Songs of Religious Content and devotion
B. Songs of Ceremonies and Festivals
C. Lullabies, Nursery Rhymes and Children game songs

II.2.A. Songs of Religious Content and Devotion

There are a good number of songs with religious content that are found in various kinds of form, content and approach. Observing these varieties of form, content and approach we can classify these into sub-types as discussed below:

i. Songs of Prayer

There was a tradition of holding prayer programme in the Bodo society. Due to impact of neo-vaishnavism, the Bodo people also started performing prayer song in their village namghar. Generally these songs are sung by women folk and sometimes women and men in the

29. Boro, Anil. op, cit, p-22
community namghar for seeking the peace and prosperity of the family and village. About the Assamese Vaishnavite prayer song, B.Datta, N.C.Sarmah, & P.C.Das, rightly say that “Community singing of hymns, both by men and women, is a distinctive feature of Assamese Hindu society particularly of the Vaishnavite cult. Apart from regular and formal service held in prayer halls, sessions of such hymn-singing are also held on special religious or auspicious occasions or just as an act of merit, either in public places or in private houses. Such songs have the generic appellation of nam, a term that signifies the reciting or singing in praise of God or any particular deity.  

There is similarity in respect of singing and performing with the Assamese neo-vaishnavite society. Among the folk songs, there are some religious songs called as Nam. Most of the Nam are hymns sung in praise of lord Vishnu (Krishna or Rama) though there are some Nams related to praise of Lord Siva and Goddess Durga or Lakhsmi too. Most probably the idea or theme of these songs is borrowed from the early Assamese literature in general and the Assamese Neo-vaishnavite literature in particular. Some of these songs are rich in poetic beauty. Moreover, there are some songs or hymns having ritualistic significance

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viz, *Ainam, Bharali Nadir git, deh bichar git* and so on, which are not directly associated with any *puja* or ritual, but have a philosophical overtone. These philosophical songs directly entered into the tribal Society through the impact of Neo-vaishnavism.

**ii. Songs of Ritualistic Association**

There are some kinds of songs or rhymes having ritualistic significance. A kind of folk song termed as *ainam* is the chief among such songs. *Bhagavati ai* (little mother) is the goddess of small pox, chicken pox, measles and a number of skin rashes. There is a belief in the society that an attack of any of these diseases is 'a visit of the mothers or the appearance of followers.' During the visit of mothers, they want cleanliness and coolness i.e. *ai* is also termed as *sitala*) which means the cool one and if they are raged and dissatisfied, it becomes dangerous. Therefore, cleanliness and coolness is observed as far as possible.

Generally the women folk perform *ainam* in a simple manner with clapping their hands in front of *ai-asana* (seat of mother) in propitiations of the pox goddess.

**iii. Devotional Songs**

There some devotional songs among the Bodo society which are not found among the Bodo people of Sonitpur district.
During the time of Indian freedom struggle some patriotic songs were sung in order to put national spirit as well as to make aware common people in many areas of Assam. For this, *Tokari Sangha* was formed particularly in Chatiya area of Sonitpur district and performed a *tokari* song.

For example,

*Jiwan nawekheni tulbul tulpul*

*Majate dubiba napao ikal sikal*

*Guri bandha dhorota o hari*

*Tumi prabhu bhava nadi niya par kari. 31*

As in Chatiya area, such kind of devotional songs are popular in the Borgaon area of Dhekiajuli circle. There was a *mrityu bahini* who organized to perform such kind of devotional songs. Jyotiprasad Agarwal and Bishnu Prasad Rabha used to come here and teach how to sing as well as perform. Still few songs are found singing in the area.

For example,

*Ami bharatiya,*

*Ami bhoy nokoro moriboloi*

*Ami aguyai jam*

*Amak lage mukti*

II.2.B. Songs of Ceremonies and Festivals

There are some songs connected with the different ceremonies and
festivals which can be discussed in the following sub-categories:

i. Songs of ceremonies connected with life cycle

ii. Songs of seasonal and agricultural festivals

iii. The Bihu songs

i. Songs of Ceremonies Connected with the life Cycle

There are some songs connected with the life cycle in the Bodo and
Assamese society. Among these the songs connected with the marriage
ceremony can be cited. The Bodo marriage ceremony is a musical affair
where a good number of songs are performed. The songs are performed
in various stage of the marriage ceremony. In the traditional Bodo
society there is a folk song associated with the importance of these two
houses, namely the granary and cowshed is as follows:

\[ Daokha\ habnay\ noawlai \]

\[ Sila\ habnai\ noawlai \]

\[ Ankhou\ dabilai\ apha\ gosai \]

\[ Mai\ bakhri\ nunaiao, \]

\[ Mwsou\ goli\ nunaiao. \]

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32. Informant, Bongaram Barmahalia, 90, Amguri, Sonitpur, Assam
Ankhou bilaihor apha gosai,

Ankhou bilaihor apha gosai,

English rendering: Do not give me marriage to a house where the cows and the kites have easy access, my father gosai (God); Give me in marriage to a house where the granary and cowshed are easily visible; O! My father God.

From this folk song, it is revealed clearly that the Bodos had been giving much importance to the presence of the granary and cowshed in the family since immemorial times. Even they also believe that if the cow and the kite enter the house where mainao (goddesses of wealth) doesn’t reside. Such kinds of song are not found and are being obsolete among the follower of neo-vaishnavite Bodos. Religion is one of the great factors for changing the society as well as the mind of the people which helped the eradication of such kind of folk belief in the neo-vaishavite Bodo society. They adopted automatically the faith and ethos of neo-vaishnavism as taught by the gosain discarding the traditional belief of the Bathou religion. There are lots of evidences that the faith and ethos are discarded totally after the people are to new religion.

There are some songs of the neo-vaishnavite Bodo people related to the rite the passage. Among these songs biyanam (marriage Songs)
occupies the most significant place not only in the Assamese Hindu but also in the Bodo society. Generally, in the traditional marriage ceremony of the Bodos of Sonitpur district, there is no instance of singing a marriage song. But among the follower of modified Bathou or also called bibar Bathou they follow one invented tradition of performing prayer song seeking a prosperous life and welfare in the name of newly married couple sitting in front of the Bathou altar. I have already mentioned above about the devotees of different religious follower about the Bodos of Sonitpur district. It is very interesting to notice here that each and every religious follower perform their ceremonies according to their prescribed religious rites and rituals. For example the followers of Christianity, the follower of Brahma, the follower of Satsangha perform the marriage ceremony their own prescribed religious rites and rituals. Like other followers, the neo-vaishnavite Bodos also perform their social ceremonies within the prescribed form of neo-vaishnavism.

In Assamese neo-vaishnavite Hindu society there is a tradition of singing various kinds of marriage song depicting different meaning and significance from the early negotiations to the end of the celebration. In this regard Jogesh Das says that “Marriage songs of Assam seem to have been composed by women folk and these songs are recited by...
women. An Assamese marriage ceremony is musical celebration in true sense. From the early negotiations to the end, at every stage of the celebration, women sing different types of songs which are meaningful for the celebration. The different stages of Assamese marriage celebration include are--Joran diya or pindhoya or tekeli diya, panitola, gadhuwa (ceremonial bath), dayandiya, gathiyan khunda, humgarit baha, akhay diya, anguthi khela etc. There are different songs for different rituals. The songs are simple in language and of home spun easy imagery. There are replete with simile, alliteration with and slush.34

Among the Assamese people of Sonitpur district, Joran diya or tekeli diya, panitola, Nowan, Dayandiya, Gathiyankhunda, Homargurit Baha, Akhoi diya, Anguthi Khela etc. are found available in the marriage ceremony. Of these songs, some are involved with the names of Krishna, Rukmini, Rama Sita or Hargouri; the ideal couples of our traditional society and the Bride and bridegroom are compared with them. Besides these, there is prevalence of Tolani Biya (ceremony observed in the attainment of puberty of a virgin girl) and sung some songs connected with this biya among the Bodo people of Sonitpur District. Interestingly Oi Ram and Hari Bola is the common word in most of the songs.

34. Prof Jogesh Das, Folklore of Assam, 2000, 104
It can be said that these songs generally reflect the minds of the Assamese women which directly came in the neo-vaishnavite Bodo society only after embracing neo-vaishnavism. There is no any dissimilarity in respect of text, context and singing these songs during the marriage ceremony with the Assamese. Needless to say that the impact of Neo-vaishnavism has contributed a new dimension to the Bodos of Sonitpur. Some examples of marriage song collected from the field are cited below:

(i) Song performed when the bridegroom’s party goes to bride’s home to present the telorbhar or joron:

\[ \text{Gopal e pasat namatiba} \]
\[ \text{Joran pindhaborlo jao he} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi batare dekhi} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi aml bate diya} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi joran pindha boloi jao he} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi roiya bangali} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi koiya batari} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi Sitar ghare bari kene he} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi Sitar ghare bari} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi itare bandhandha} \]
\[ \text{Ram oi hengul tire bire kare he} \]
Ram oi larijogai
Ram oi ramchandrak kowagoi
Ram oi Sitar barat dhari asehe
Ram oi ruithai ahiso
Ram oi dai lai anagoi
Ram oi hai are kanere saman he
Ram oi alani dalani
Ram oi pake charpasani
Ram oi amar hate bhari bhagene
Ram oi teo nepatia
Ram amar Balorame
Ram oi teobole soali anehe
Ram oi lari jewgai
Ram oi sahurak kowagoi
Ram oi bandhokhi sundaria alihe.  

English rendering: O Gopal! Don’t call from the back, we are going to perform *joran*, clear the path, we are going to celebrate *joran*. Write and inform us, how it is the Sita’s house is built of brick, it is getting with *hengul*. Ram and tell *Ramchandra* that *Sita* is on holy. We have shown paddy, go and harvest *maniki, madhuri* rice. *O Ram*, we have always

35. Informant: Lakheswari Boro, F, 58, Ulubari, Thelamara, Sonitpur
negotiated, you go here. She is as tall as to reach your ear's Ram!! the path is rough our Baloram doesn't believe, he wants, bride yet Ram, Run and tell your father to construct a smooth (senduria) road.

Like the Assamese Hindu society, there is also a tradition of singing a song at the time of bridegroom's ceremonial bath which I observed in the neo-vaishnavite Bodo villages particularly in the Ulubari, Vekveki Kachari, villages of Thelamara and Namati and Ghogara, Namati Habigaon villages of Binduguri area. The example of song is as follows:

*Sajou duralir hat*

*Amar daliloi he*

*Kare ghanta loa Ratha e mure loa mala*

*Ja munalai jaba lage nakariba heca*

*Jai hatate Daibakir*

*Jai hate sasurua*

*Jai cah sai Daibakir bala*

*Jai dhal patar mekhela*

*Jai ujati single*

*Jai lage garganya phota*

*Jai dige dighali*

*Jai chitakar marali*
The above song describes the bridegroom’s mother as *Daiboki*, the mother of Srikrishna. In the first part of the song, her ceremonial wearing are described, then her sensational mind and then the path is described as the path of *Gakul*. The tank or river from where the water would be lifted is described as holy river *Yamuna*.

When the bridegroom is late to come to the ceremonial bathing place, then he is teased and the women folk sing that the mother is in search of the groom and he is proceeding to *Kundil Nagar*, the place of *Rukmini* to play *ghila*. Then they request him with song to come hurriedly, as the women folk are waiting for him. Then oil is poured on the head of the bridegroom and women folk sing as the following:

*Tamol thiya kari dhire tele diba*

*Oi Ram, sughandha malati tele he*

*Sugandha malati haokha parbati*

*Ai sikemikai henguli haitalar phani he*

*Teli samarar pira khani e hari*
Gada pad mar khura

Tate bahi nuwara kare sonar sekura.\(^{37}\)

English Rendering: Pour oil slowly from the top of erected betel nut, pour scented oil for removal of all impediments oil is glittered on the beautiful guy; the neck is glittered with Jewel, what is there in the first? Combs of hengul haital is there. He is sitting on a pira of good quality wood which stands are of Lord Vaishnav’s material and he who is like a piece of gold is being bathed.

Another important social folk custom of the neo-vaishnavite Assamese society called Tulani biya is also observed by the neo-vaishnavite Bodos. There is also some songs sung by the women folk during the time of performance of this biya:

Jai hendolat kapor thai

Jai olai komal dai

Jai tare logar samania mate

Jai salale erilli sale bare kapor

Jatara erili paji

Marar bare gharat umali asili

Matire madali sai..........\(^{38}\)

\(^{37}\) Ibid

\(^{38}\) Ibid
English rendering: Keeping your cloths come kolmodoi, you called your companion, you have kept halo woven cloth at your loom: helo done bobbin at the spinning wheel. You were playing in your mother’s groom making earthen tray.

There is also another song which advises the girl is her new stage. This song is as follows:

Deautar padulit raktaiasa,
etia santi hala.
Santi hai rupit najaba
Puruse nubuje tirotar mol
Tirije epahi parijat phul
Sei parijatat bhomora pure
Madar phular dare anandar kare.\textsuperscript{39}

English rendering: There is red jaba flower at the gate of father’s house, now you have attained puberty, so be calm, do not go near a male person; they don’t understand the value of women. They don’t think that women is an eternal flower (parijat phul). That eternal flower is neglected as madar (coral flower) if hornet collects honey from it.

\textsuperscript{39} ibid
II.2.C. Songs of Seasonal and Agricultural Festivals

Assam is known as the land of agriculture. In the world there are lots of songs connected with the seasonal and agricultural festival of great significance. There are also many seasonal and agricultural festivals among the various communities i.e. tribes and non-tribes in Assam.

Among these festivals the Bwisagu is the greatest agricultural and seasonal festival among the Bodos of Assam. Besides this festival, the Magh or Bhogali Bihu and Kati Bihu are also the important festivals for calendaric festival of these people. When the bardwisikhla starts coming, the Bodos think that the New Year Bwaisgw has come. There is a legend associated with the coming of Bwisagu in the Bodo society.

Now it is seen that the Bohag Bihu is celebrated from the beginning of new Assamese Calendar and from the agricultural point of view it comes at the beginning of the seed time, just after the first rains. Magh Bihu is also known as Bhogali Bihu is celebrated in mid January, that is in winter and it is with harvest,Kati Bihu is celebrated in Mid October i.e. in the autumn season and it is meant for the welfare of the traditional winter crop especially paddy, the main agriculture.

The spring time Bohag Bihu festival is the most important festival of joy and merry making not only in the Bodo society but also in the
Assamese society. Singing and dancing are one of the features of the festival. In the Assamese society, there are two types of song connected with the Bihu festival—the Bihu song and huchari song. The Bihu songs are unique in their music and have great significance.

*Huchuri* is performed by group of men. Bishnu Prasad Rabha says that the term *huchuri* is derived from the Bodo word *hwsrikhao* which means singing loudly. Generally the *huchuri* party visits every household irrespective of rich and poor of the village. In the Bodo society also there is a tradition of begging in every household of the village singing a song. But no any musical instrument is used and even the song is so sweet and melodious that where is no noise during the performance. For example,

*Koni eti diya,*

*Koni nay jadi,*

*Soul alap diya.*

English rendering: Give me an egg, if you have no egg, give me little rice.

Another example can be cited:

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40. Informant: Madan Basumatari, M, 45, Uppar Borigaon, Sonitpur, Assam
Among the neo-vaishnavite Bodo society the Bodo people perform *huchuri* like the Assamese people. Sometimes they use *dhol* and *tal* during the *huchuri* singing.

*Deutar padulit gondhaise Madhuri*

*Keteki malemati oi Gobindai Ram.*

English rendering: The smell of *Madhuri* is coming from the household of *deuta,*

*Keteki* is being from there, O’ *Gobinda* O’ *Ram!*

iii. The Bihu Songs and The Youth

The Bihu is the most important festival of the people of Assam which is celebrated during the time of *Bohag* or spring time. The springtime Bihu festival is characterized by singing, dancing, feasting and merry making young boy and damsels sing songs and perform the *bihu* dances during the these the 7 days of the festival. The songs are characterized and as songs of love and yearning of the advent of the New Year.

The characteristic features of the Bihu songs are clearly reflected in the following descriptive note on the stage. “The Bihu songs are normally quatrains with alternate rhymes, while minor modifications to suit individual purposes are made. The songs on the whole circulate like

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41. Informant, Ramani Boro, Ulubari, Thelamara, Sonitpur
much handled coins, and boys and girls repeat them in certain exquisite melodic patterns suitable for the rhythms of the *Bihu* dance. There are hundreds and hundreds of such songs. Some of them, judged by language and tone, must be more than a century old: some are of comparatively recent origin, and the stock is constantly being added to with up to date compositions. The *Bihu* songs are excellent poetry; they describe beauty, both of nature and of the loved one, express adoration of the sweetheart, glorify youth and speak frustration and sorrow.42

The nature and characteristics of the *Bihu* songs are so unique that they can attract the folk mind of Assam. Even the beauty and melody of these songs are incomparable with neighbouring societies in Assam. After embracing neo-vaishnavism the Bodo people of Assam gave up speaking Bodo language and culture whereas they learnt Assamese language and Sankari culture to make and identify themselves as pure Assamese people. And they learnt and performed Assamese *Bihu* songs and dance in place of Bodo *Bwisagu* song and dance.

So, the Bodo people of Assam particularly in some areas like Guwahati, Dibrugarh, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Jorhat, Sibsagar still perform *Bihu* song and dance during the *Bihu* festival. The few examples of the

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42 Datta, Sarmah & Das, op-cit, p-62
Bihu songs of Sonitpur district sung by the neo-vaishnavite Bodos are as follows:

Tai jabi mohoholoi
Mai jam jakoiloi
Dingi eli meli sabi
Biringar mushate
Tamal tho ahime
Hera palo buli khabi.⁴³

English rendering: you will go for tend buffalo, I shall go for fishing with a jakoi, you will look me extending your neck, I shall keep under biringa creep, you will take it.

Tomar kotha bhabi rati nahe
Toponi senai rati nahe topani
Thake tomar katha koi
Jenetene kori ratito katalo ratito katalo
Soa garu saboti loi.⁴⁴

English rendering: Thinking and thinking about you, I couldn't sleep at night, sometimes I touch my pillow and try to sleep thinking the Pillow as you.

⁴³ Informnat, Mohan Mech, Habrubari, Binduguri, Sonitpur, Assam
⁴⁴ Ibid.
There is a Bihu song composed by the youth considering the contemporary events of the society and some social problems are also reflected through these songs. As for example,

Loi ahico camera,

Tulilojam cehera

Duarot olomai dhom.\(^{45}\)

Another example is:

Hai kopal,

Mor kopalot nai sakori

Nahale tomak ajiye ni

Biya patibo parileheten.\(^{46}\)

English rendering: Oh luck, no job in my luck, If I had, I would have married you today.

Moreover, there are some songs connected with the Bihu festival celebrated with merry making, song and dance by the Bodo people of Sonitpur. The Assamese speaking Bodo people sing various kinds of songs during the Bihu festival. Two examples are the following:

Palo moy, palo may

Guma gadaori

Ki buwari palo may

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\(^{45}\) Informant, Kinaram Boro, Ghatua, Sonitpur, Assam

\(^{46}\) Ibid.
Guma gadaori.47

The simple meaning is: ‘What kind of daughter in law, I got, She is guma gadaori’.

Another song is:

\[
\begin{align*}
Eyar\ giri\ kaloi\ gol \\
Charai\ hal\ bai \\
Eyar\ giri\ kaloi\ gol \\
Charai\ hal\ bai \\
Chabai\ hal\ bai \\
Micha\ saja\ gali\ parito \\
Micha\ saja\ gali\ parito \\
Duwar\ meli\ chai \\
Heroi\ rat \\
Herai\ rat\ heroi \\
Lao\ futu\ futu \\
lao\ futu \\
Bengna\ futu\ bengna\ futu \\
Adhuli\ khiki \\
Eyar\ para\ nutho\ hei \\
Eyar\ para\ nuthu\ hei
\end{align*}
\]

\footnotesize{Informant,Jogeswar Boro,Borbil,Kawaimari,Sonitpur,Assam}
The above mentioned song is the clear evidence of the influence of neo-
vaishnavism among the Bodos of Sonitpur district.

On the occasion of Kati or Kongali Bihu, the Bodo people
generally pray in the altar of Bathou and light lamp in the paddy field
for the welfare of crops. But the neo-vaishnavite Bodo people is planted
the holy *tulasi* plant and offer light lamp. Then simple prayer song is
sung.

There are no any specific songs associated with the *Magh Bihu* in
the Bodo society. But it is seen among the neo-vaishnavite Assamese
speaking Bodo society in the Naharbari area that they perform choral
*kirtan path* and *nam kirtan* throughout the *uruka* day at *bihughar* or

Informant: Tarju Narzari, M.75, Dhekido, Sonitpur
bhelaghar. It is interesting to note here that some of the villagers take bhoj with pork and enjoy together at the premises of bihughar.

For example,

*Raya raya...........
Or asathar tale.....*49

II.2.D. Lullabies, Nursery Rhymes and Children Game song

The Bodo term for Lullabies and Nursery Rhymes are Khudiya phuthugra methai or khudrinai methai gotho or gotho burkhaynay methai. In Assamese these are termed as Nishukuni and dhainam. Lullabies mean the act of soothing a weeping baby to be silent. Each and every society of the world has lullabies, nursery rhymes and game song. Like that there are many nishukuni git or lullabies among the Bodos of Sonitpur.

For example,

*Oh Siyal ei nahibi rati
Tore kan kati kati lagame bati.*50

Oh fox don’t come at night, otherwise I shall cut your ears and will make saki (lamp) of it.

*Amar moina subalai

Oi Ram tai khabalai khujanai*

49 Ibid.
50 Informant: Dhirei Boro, M, 60, Namati Habigaon, Sonitpur, Assam
Mak koloi gol bichari anagoi

Oi Ram moina lagane ache

Bapek gol bepar karibaloi

Oi Ram moinaloi aniba kihe

Moainaloi aniba jumuka lagoa

Oi Ram hatidatar phanihe.\textsuperscript{51}

English rendering: Our little baby is going to sleep, O.Ram, he is refusing to take food, where has mother gone? Find out her where about? O Ram, moina is abstinent from food, The father has gone for trading, O' Ram, what will he bring for moina. He will bring a combs of ivory ornament with jumuka.

Besides these lullabies, there are some songs which are sung by the Bodo people of Assam as follows:

Jonbay e beji eta diya

Bejino kelei moina

Mona chilabalai

Monano kelei

Dhan bharabalai

Dhanoko kelei

Hati Kinibaloi

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid
Hatino kelei

Uthi phoribaloi.  

English rendering:

Oh moon!
Give me a needle
Why a needle?
To sew a wallet
Why o' wallet!
To keep money
Why do you want money?
To buy an elephant
Why an elephant?
To ride on it.

Another most popular nursery song is included in the text book is

O phul o phul muphula kiyo

Garuyeje ag khai moino phulim kiyo

O garu, o garu, ag khaono kiyo.  

English rendering

O, flower, o flower,
Why don't you bloom?

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52 Ibid
53 Informant: Malati Boro. Upar Kachari Gaon, Tezpur, Sonitpur
The cow nips my shoots
Why then should I bloom?
O, cow, why do you nip the shoots...etc.

Another important song is:

*Beng kande tararat saparamatir talat*

*Na buwarir sana kande,*

*Phata kanir talat*

*Kour kande keleng keseng,*

*Bahar agalat hai bahar agalat*

*Ahibi jahibi dhamak maribi*

*Nisile phandat pari bhiji maribi.*

The above mentioned rhyme is a humorous song and the language is the spoken Assamese language.

**II.3: Proverbs**

Proverb is an important sub genre of oral literature or verbal art. It plays a great role in the society and folklife. Scholars and folklorists have identified the proverbs as fixed phrase genre. Alan Dundes said proverbs as “impersonal vehicles for personal communication”. According to A.H. Krape, proverbs may be described as “the terse didactic and metaphorical

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54. Informant: Tankeswar Boro, Velouguri, Sonitpur, Assam.
statements containing concise honesty truths on various aspects of life”\textsuperscript{56}. Muther says that proverbs are considered as essence of thoughts and philosophy that a group of people acquire through the ages.”\textsuperscript{57} In fact, proverbs are expression of the folk, based on their observation to the mankind, nature and experience and they transmit orally from generation to generation.

The term for proverb in Bodo is “Bathra Bhao or Bathrani Bhao”. There are also many types of Bodo proverbs. “The verbal art of the Bodos is rich in proverbs.”\textsuperscript{58} In fact, the Bodos have abundance of proverbs. Some of them have been collected. According to Anil Boro, the proverbs of the Bodos have been collected; but these have not been properly collected and analysed on the basis of their texture and context.\textsuperscript{59}

Assamese folk literature is not poor in proverbs. The term \textit{Phakara jojana} is often used to indicate proverbs and aphorism. This is actually meant for a philosophical expression which has suggestiveness in meaning and commonly has a secret meaning. These are called \textit{bhakatia phakara} and most of them are created as a result of neo-vaishnavism movement. Apart from the \textit{bhakatia phakaras} there are some other often

\textsuperscript{56} Krappe, A.H \textit{The Science of Folklore}, p-123
\textsuperscript{47} Muther, G.B, \textit{What is proverb}, p-353
\textsuperscript{58} Anil Boro, \textit{Folk-Literature of Bodo. An Introduction}, 2004, p-123
\textsuperscript{59} ibid
called as *jojana* or *patantar*. Most of *jojanas* are comparison only and the term *jojana* itself means comparison.\(^6^0\)

The vaishnavite movement has brought a new dimension in the language, culture and religion among the people of Assam. After embracing neo-vaishnavism the Bodo people of Assam accepted neo-vaishnavite folklore materials which brought tremendous change in the Bodo society. In the Sonitpur district, there are lots of proverbs used by the Assamese speaking Bodos specially neo-vaishnavite Bodo people make no distinction between the Assamese caste Hindu and converted vaishnavite Bodos in respect of proverbs. It has been observed that the parents and elders in the society use a proverb to guide the action of children and juniors. A proverb is used to suggest a course of action or to pass judgment on a situation. Sometimes proverbs may be nothing but a mere statement of fact, at other times it is as effective as formulated rule. But the didactic element is always present in proverbs.

*Tinidal suli take bandhe tuli*

*Girie ke mate rupahi buli.*\(^6^1\)

She has few hairs

She ties it with care and her husband calls her a handsome women.

*Mati kininba kunikuni, garu kiniba gai*

\(^6^0\) A.K Ojha, Op-cit. 113
\(^6^1\) Informant, Tarini Bala Boro, Ulubari, Sonitpur, Assam
Cow should be purchased from a familiar place.

Girl should be married from a day’s walking distance.

You should undertake cultivation of sugarcane only when you have seven sons and thirteen grandsons.

But some proverbs are common in every society: For example:

Bapek sai putek in Assamese fifa jwlwi fisa in Bodo i.e. like father like son.

II: 4: Riddle

A riddle is defined as igneous question expressed usually in the form of metaphor, not in the form of a direct question, without any figurative meaning of the words which enter into it. According to Aristotle, a riddle is also well composed metaphor, and an answer recording to which the hidden meaning or the red content of the implied sense is

\[\text{Chuwali aniba letera petera, ghar dhariba tai} \]
\[\text{Garu kiniba ringtor batat, sowali aniba dintor batat.}^{62}\]

\[\text{Sat po nati, tehe kariba kuihar kheti, ie.}^{63}\]

\[\text{Raije nakh jukarile noi boi.}^{64}\]
fully revealed or expressed. Concealment thus becomes the most vital one.”

Roger Abrahamns, riddles are also “brief genre of oral expressions. Like the proverbs, riddles are like short epigrammatic questions asked in a playful contest situation. Roger Abrahams has defined the riddles as “questions that are framed with a purpose of confusing or testing the wits of those who do not know the answer”

In riddles the referent is to be guessed. The answer is to the known to the poser of the riddles but not by the addressee. Riddles are questions that are framed with purpose of confusing or testing the wits of those who do not know the answer. They are commonly called forth during “riddling session” in special occasions during which such witty devices may be used in a properly playful contest situation.

Riddle in English is termed in Bodo as “Distan or Bathra Phandai”. As the riddles are traditional oral expression they contain descriptive elements which are contrasted to each other. So, Dr. Anil Boro in his book “Folk Literature of the Bodos: An Introduction” classified the riddles in four types as (i) Metaphorical contrast (ii) Incomplete metaphor (iii) Contrast resulting from excessive descriptive elements (iv) Contrast through false metaphor.

The example of Bodo riddles are:

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66. Bhagawant, Durga, The Riddle in Indian Life, Lore and Literature in India, p-1
67. Roger Abrahamns, Riddles in Folklore and Folklife, p-130
68. Anil Boro, op-cited-
No dong dorkhong gwiya
Rao dong mansi gwiya, answer: radio

i.e., A house with put door
Has voice but not a human being. Answer: Radio
Thus Bodos have various riddles. Among the Assamese speaking Bodos
of Sonitpur use the following riddles.
Assamese influential riddles are as follows;

Ejani koli gai,ghate pani khai. A black cow takes water from the bank to bank.
Answer: fishing

Make barasi bay, puteke akas say, Answer: the mother fishes with hook, the son looks at the sky.

II.5: Folk Speech

Folk speech embraces the local and regional turns of phrases that
deviate from the standard language (Dorson, 1972:2) which is usually
taught in schools in an informal manner. One of the main characteristics
of folk speech is that it is more restricted to oral circulation. With the
total vocabulary of every speaker there is a large number of words that

69. ibid, 28
70. Informant: Jogeswar Boro, Meghayati, Sonitpur
71. Ibid
he never writes and seldom uses in formal situations. These words or expressions may be taboo words or expressions or they may be a kind of passive vocabulary. Moreover, these characteristics of folk speech are not only limited to vocabulary, but there exist at the level of grammar, idiom and phonetics. For example, slang in this respect is folk speech. India abounds in language diversity. Besides their major forms of oral literature; there are minor forms which also fall under the above rubric. There are chants, prayers, laments, ories and even hollers”.

The Bodo people of Sonitpur district are bi-lingual Bodo and Assamese. Majority of them can speak both the languages fluently. In some areas in Sonitpur district, the Bodo people had to take the Assamese language and culture due to minority status. As the world of human relationship is ruled by the give and take policy, the Bodo people in the course of time have totally converted into Assamese society. In this way the Assamese speaking Bodo society came to be influenced by the greater Assamese culture. But they still manage to retain some elements of their own culture and stick to some characteristics belief pertaining to the cultural tradition of the Bodos. It is very interesting to note here to study about the assimilation of the Bodo folklore with that of the Assamese. Though they gave up their language in the process, yet

72. Handoo, J. Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction, pp-14-15
they retained many original Bodo words. The list of Bodo words; Abou, abwi, oma bedor etc. which they still use in their day to day affairs, is given at the end of this thesis. They use the Bodo counterparts deouta (father), ma (mother) and zowai (brother in law), buwari (daughter in law) all the relative pronouns of the Assamese language. There are lots of folk speeches used by the Bodo Assamese speakers in the Sonitpur district. Here the main objectives of study are to focus the folk speech of Assamese speaking Bodo people. It needs to be mentioned here that the folk speech of the district is almost identical to the standard Assamese language; yet slight differences can be observed among the Assamese speaking Bodo speakers. A few of example of them are given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kinship Term</th>
<th>In standard Assamese</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dota, deouta, pita, pitai</td>
<td>deuta, pita</td>
<td>father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ai, mai</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td>mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dadai, dedai</td>
<td>dadai</td>
<td>paternal uncle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abou, koka</td>
<td>kaka</td>
<td>grand father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboi, aita</td>
<td>aita</td>
<td>grand mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamay</td>
<td>mama</td>
<td>maternal uncle, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vocabulary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gudhur</th>
<th>Gadhur</th>
<th>heavy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Buhut, bahut</td>
<td>bahut</td>
<td>very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nekheba, nakhaba</td>
<td>nakhaba</td>
<td>don’t eat. etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nakham, nakhang</td>
<td>nekhaou, nakhao</td>
<td>will not eat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jang/jam</td>
<td>jam</td>
<td>will go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nejang</td>
<td>nejao</td>
<td>will not go</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Besides these there are some folk speeches of the district. These are some phrases are used in the sense of abuse, curse and treatment with slight. Examples of such phrases are as follows:

1. Phrases used to abuse

   Kukurar puwali, (son of dog),

   Jahara, gunda

   Paji, maou mara. 73

2. Phrases used to curse:

   Jahanname jabi,

   haijat jabi,

   rou rou narakat paribi 74 etc.

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73 Informant, Ratan Basumatari, Balipara, Sonitpur, Boro
74 Ibid
3. Phrases used to treat with slang:

*Heriar putek* (meaning son of someone)  

*Herier ghainek* (wife of someone)  

*Baperor murtu* (head of your father)  

*Bapekar jat* (the family of father)  

*Baga dhonir po* (son of a rich man)  

Besides the above mentioned folk speech used by the people, sometimes some slang words are used to speak something with force and abuse someone. These slang words are generally derived from the names of secret organs.