

CHAPTER-7

CONCLUTION & FINDINGS

This chapter is the conclusion and summary of the finding of the research work entitled: “*Aspect of Rituals, Philosophy and Folk Literature of the Bathou Religion*”. The research has been discussed under the seven chapters. The research work has been based on the Archetype of the Bathou, Ritualistic aspects, Philosophical and oral literature of the Bathou religion. The conclusion chapter is a brief summary on the findings of these foregoing chapters.

The chapter-1 is entitled “*Introduction*”. In this chapter, discussions have been about the introduction of the Bodo and about Bathou religion and their beliefs. Besides of these, aims and objectives, hypothesis of the study, significance of the study, methodology, statement of the problem and review of literature have been discussed under this chapter.

The Bathou religion is one of the oldest religions of the world. Bathou religion played a significant role in the field of socio- cultural life of the Bodo community and contributed a lot to control the society and created unified society among all sections of the Bodo. Bathou religion is reflected as the mirror of custom of the Bodo. All the rites and rituals are related with the Bathou religion. This religion teaches to worship the Bathou, sacrifices, love, and devotion, removing the selfishness and helping each other. The followers are planted Sijou plant as the symbol of Bwrai-Bathou. A Basil plant is planted in the right side of the Sijou plant as the symbol of purity and a Zathrasi plant also planted in the left side as a symbol of knowledge and wisdom. The Altar of Bathou is bamboo fenced surrounding by centering Sijou, Tulunshi and Zathrasi plant.

The Bodos are the largest tribe of the Assam. They are now intermixed with the Assamese people and other religious people, not only in Assam but also in the national and international. But still they have preserved their language and traditional socio-religious beliefs and practices at some levels. Like, other tribes of the North-East India Bodo are having their religious beliefs. Apart from the Supreme God of Bwrai-Bathou, they also believed other benevolent and malevolent deities. Bathou

religion has no any written religious code but Bodo are believed it from generation to generation.

The chapter-2 is entitled “*Archetype of the Bathou*”. In this chapter, discussions have been about use of bamboo, five rows of the Bathou fencing and eighteen pairs of posts, dhaothu bikha hebna, rangtham or sili-mala, pherenga lanjai, place of cotton on pherenga lanjai, elements of Bathou and role of Oza.

Bathou is placed at the north-east corner of the courtyards of the house. They worship Bwrai-Bathou and other gods and goddesses at the Bathou Altar. But the Song Raja and Song Rani and Mainao (goddesses of wealth) are placed inside the main house. The followers of Bathou are believed that the Bwrai-Bathou is the Creator, Nutritore and Destroyer of all the human beings, animals and other living beings of the world.

The five rows of the Bathou fencing have different meaning itself and the eighteen pair of posts also has different names and their duties. Every structure of the Bathou Altar has deep meaning. Thus, Bathou religion is a traditional religion of the Bodo and it has unique characteristics and people are dependent on its activities. The traditional rites and rituals are bonded or reflected through the worship of Bathou. The worship of the Bathou is also unique from the other religions. There is no any fixed worship place like, temple and mosque. But at present the followers of the Bathou religion have made ‘Bathou Sali’ for the worship of religious festivals.

Oza (a medicine man) is a very important person among the Bodo community. He takes very important role during the every rites and rituals of the Bathou. In the worship of Bathou, Oza play a very important role in maintaining the Bathou Altar and process of worship.

The findings of the analysis are given below

- (a) The use of one full-grown bamboo is very important for fencing of Bathou.
- (b) There is no controversy seen in using sixteen or eighteen pairs of posts for fencing Bathou. The difference is that some disciples used to place the position of Song Raja-Song Rani and Mainao goddess in Ising, a sacred place inside the main house.

- (c) Place of cotton on the pherenga lanjai is a symbol of purity and marriage. In the past Bathou disciples used to put cotton on the married women`s hooped hair as a symbol of marriage.
- (d) Extra post placed with Agrong and Basumathi god and goddess also the symbol of Asagi and Bwisagi.
- (e) Five binding of ‘Teowl’ also the symbol of sons of Asagi and Bwisagi, i.e. Fwrse, Fwrtisai, Bartisai, Golafwrsai and Ahiu.
- (f) Eighteen pairs of post of Bathou have different roles and duties.

The chapter-3 is entitled “*Ritualistic Aspects of the Bathou Religion*”. In this chapter, discussions have been about the ritualistic aspects of the Bathou religion. There are many rites and ritual aspects including traditional Bathou religion. Bodos are performs major and minor festivals and ceremonies during the whole year, like religion festival, seasonal and agricultural festival. Kherai and Garza are the main religious festivals of the Bathou followers. Besides of these, Salami and Narashinga are also the religious festivals.

The Kherai festival is the biggest religion festival of the Bodo. In the earlier, Bodos are observed the Kherai festival in four different types. But at present they observed only ‘phalw kherai’ during the month of Maghw (January) in the second Tuesday. Garza festival is celebrated in a village. In Kherai festival Doudini takes very important role during the worship. Without Doudini the traditional Kherai worship will be incompleted. The Douri have also important role during the worship of Kherai festival. Kherai festival reflects the culture of the Bodo, by the dance of Doudini and worship of Kherai festival.

In the previous time, Doudini placed the most important role during the Kherai, but today the Kherai festival is worship without Doudini. The sacrifice is the necessary part of the traditional religious festivals. The traditional Bodo instruments like Kham, Siphung and Serza are played during Kherai worship.

They performed various ceremonies and festivals in relation with birth, wedding, death and agriculture activities. Bwisagu is the most famous seasonal festival of the Bodo. The rites of cattle are also very interested. They celebrate domasi which is observed during the month of Magh.

There are many rites and ritual including domestic ceremonies. The life cycle of the Bodos are surrounded with the birth, marriage and death rites and ritual. At the time of birth they follow many rites and ritual, like woman charge, navel cutting ceremony, duari hanai, khulao swnai, khalai sunai, feast providing etc. The marriage ceremony is the social ceremony in the life cycle of the Bodo. Including marriage ceremony Bodo performs many ceremonies, like bride asking ceremony, bangle inserts and returns ceremony (ashan thebnai), betel nut cutting ceremony, biban langnai, alternative of relationship, divorce system etc.

There are traditional rites and rituals of collecting money from the bridegroom. These are phon khonnai (gaojwn), barwi ganai (barwi haga), malsha, mamai mara, kholar gothainai etc. Athmangal is the ceremony of after the marriage. All these rites and rituals are followed by the Bodo traditionally. Thus, marriage is a very important in the life cycle of the Bodo; which is seen in the marriage ceremonies.

But today, along with the six system of marriage or traditional marriage, some new types of marriage system come up in practice due to the influence of modernization on Bodo society, like court marriage, temple marriage, church marriage, marriage through Brahma Dharma.

There is a ceremony connected with entering to new house, which is known as 'Habsa hatharnai'. The courtyard of a Bodo family contains the Altar of Bathou. The structure of cowshed, granary and main house also made with their traditional beliefs. The main house stretches from the west to the east. There are three divisions of the main house with the provision of a door, facing to the south. The easternmost portion of the main house is mean for cooking and worship.

Findings

- (a) Bodos are performing all the rites and rituals with traditional system. What ever it is worship of religion, festivals and domestics ceremonies.
- (b) Taking some nominal prices for the name of marriage from the bridegroom is something different from others.
- (c) There is a traditionally divorce system by tearing a betel leave among the gathering of the public.

- (d) It is found that every rite and rituals are for the wellbeing of the human beings and their seasonal crops.

The chapter-4 is entitled “*Philosophical Aspects of the Bathou religion*”. This chapter is mainly analyzed from the secondary source. In this chapter analyzed have been about the intimate connection with number five, five fold preaching’s of Bathou, five laws, five traditional customs, five customary rituals, holy sermons, holy realizations, five sense of love and hatred for antisocial activities. The philosophy of the Bathou religion is indicates a holy link between the Bwrai-Bathou and other gods and goddesses and with the human beings of the world. The word Bathou is combined with two words. These are ‘Ba’ and ‘Thou’. Ba means ‘five’ and Thou means ‘Deep’. That means ‘Five deep thought’. This pentagonal relation of the numeral ‘five’ has well been expressed in the following piece of a verse.

Thaigirni khonga khongba,

Sijouni siria siriba

Siphongni gudunga gudungba,

Bathounin bandwa bandwba

Boro Bwraini raoabw phongba

English Rendering

The elephant apple has five rinds,

Euphorbia splendens has five ridges,

The siphong has five holes

The Bathou has five knots,

And the great saintly Bodo Bwrai has five moral preaching.

The first imaginary gods of worship by the primitive Bodo people are also five. These are Ailong god of earth, Agrang god of water, khwila god of air, Sanja Bwrali god of fire and Raj khungri goddess of sky respectively. The finding of this

chapter is that, the name of 'Bathou' and its principles is intimate connection with number five.

Chapter-5 is entitled "*Oral Literature, Originality and Negotiation*". This chapter is containing about oral literature related with Bathou religion, name of gods and goddesses and popular verses.

Bodos have rich in oral literature or verbal art. In this chapter, only those folk literatures are written, which are directly related with the Bathou religion like myths, folk songs related with Bathou, prayer songs, charms, bwidasi song etc. Besides of these, they have rich in folk tales, folk songs, legends, proverbs, riddles, ballad etc. All the elements of Bodo folk song are traditionally coming down from generation to generation. But now some traditional narratives, songs, proverbs, riddles and charms have been recorded and published by folklorists and other writer.

Findings

- (a) It is found that in creation of Bathou religion, 'myth' is related to the structure of Bathou Altar.
- (b) There are many myths of traditional musical instruments.
- (c) It is also found that every charm and prayers are different which chanted during the worship.
- (d) Oza, Doudini and Douri take important roles during worship and other ceremonies.

Chapter- 6 is entitled "*Various Influences on Bathou Religion*". In this chapter containing sub chapters are influences of Hinduism, influence of Christians, influence of Buddhism, influence of Islamism, transition of Bathou and impact of modernity on Bathou. The traditional Bathou religion is now influenced by other religions. In the middle Assam many Bodos have impact of the process of sanskritization and they are in process of assimilation into the Hindu society. The large part of Bodo of Assam are converted themselves in to Christianity, Sarania, Brahma Dharam, Islamic, Buddhism etc. The influence of other religion is not only impact on religion but also impact on Bodo cultural too. They also now performed other religious festivals.

From the analysis of this chapter, it is found that the impact of modernity is the major cause of influence other religion on Bathou religion. The following given points are the major findings of the researchers-

ABRU (All Bathou Religious Union), a religious organization was established in 1992 year. From those years the Bathou religion and their beliefs are energizing and reforming the traditional Bathou. The traditional role of the Douri and Doudini during the Kherai worship is replaced by the Gwthari Asari. The organizers are appointed the Gwthari Asari. The name of the Oza is replaced with 'Zanaguru'. At the time of worship the followers are now sing the prayer song of 'Bathou Aroj'. The Bathousali or Thansali also constructed for the worship like, temple, churches and mosques. The observers selected 'Tuesday' as the worship day of Bathou. Instead of sacrificing animals, the worshipers prefer to offers flowers, fruits etc. Bathou followers are now enjoying state holiday in the second Tuesday of the Magh month.

The researcher has tried to discuss the archetype of Bathou religion, oral literature related with Bathou religion, aspects of rites and rituals and their philosophical thought.

Scope of the Further Research

The area of research is very wide. Some datas may remain untouched which would be important part of any researcher regarding the Bathou religion. Therefore further research work may be taken by interested scholar on the Bathou religion. The scope of further study are-

- (a) There is a scope of further study about the Song Raja God and Song Rani Goddess. The area of this study will be wide. The Bathou followers are now belief that the Song-Raja and Song-Rani are from the Song Dynasty.
- (b) There is another scope of further study about the different charms of Bathou religion.
- (c) It is seen that there is further scope of study about the interdisciplinary relevance of Doudini's dances as a folk literature.