

CHAPTER -IV

SOCIO-CULTURAL AND ECONOMY PERSPECTIVES

4.1 Introduction

Socio-cultural studies concentrate on how the society and its culture influence the everyday life of human beings. These three short story collections *Gunda*, *Banalata* and *Dantharu*, are created with different philosophical thoughts, expressions and incidents of the society which were prevailing and existed. The writer also highlighted the socio-economic, traditional, cultural and various other aspects of the society through these short stories. Moreover, the characteristics of the short stories also depict the occurrences and incidents which are found in human society in general and Bodo society in particular and thus the writer highlighted the same accordingly in his short stories.

Society and literature are interrelated. It is said that literature is the mirror of society. So, before going to describe the reflection of society in literature let us make clear what; in fact; the society is. Society in literature it refers to human beings, generally or less often an organized group of persons living as members of a community. It may also mean classes of people grouped according to worldly status.¹

Peter Childs writes in *The Routledge Dictionary of Literary Terms* regarding the critical usage of the society. Society in critical usage, a term with two main senses: (1) the 'society' of a novel play or poem, a social world created or imitated within the work, (2) the 'society' of literature's creation and consumption, the world of customs, values and institutions and language- habits in which the work is created, published and read, the culture in its broadest definition (cf culture).²

¹Gupta, A.N. and Gupta, Satish: *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Prakash Book Depot, 1976, p-332

²Peter Childs: *The Routledge Dictionary Of Literary Terms*, Routledge, 2005 pp-220-221

We thus come to a singularly interesting and fertile line of inquiry of what does the literature do for society - The study of the literature of an age as the expression of its characteristic spirit and ideas.³

As there is a common racial character in the literary productions of any given people, so therefore there is a common time-character in the literary productions of such people at any given period-- A nation's life has its mood of exaltation and depression; its epochs now of strong faith and strenuous idealism, now of doubt, struggle, and disillusion, now of unbelief and flippant disregard for the sanctities of existence; and while the manner of expression will vary greatly with the individuality of each writer, the dominant spirit of the hour, whatever that may be, will directly or indirectly reveal itself in his work.⁴

According to Goethe's dictum that *since every man is a citizen of his age as well as of his country. In this connection Renan puts it one belongs to one's century and race even when one reacts against one's century and race.*⁵

That the domain of literature cannot permanently be thus isolated and that really to understand literature it has continually to get out of literature into the life by which it is fed. As behind every book that is written lies the personality of the man who writes it and as behind every national literature lay the character of the race which produces it; so behind the literature of any period lie the combined forces—personal and impersonal which made the life of that period as a whole.

Literature is only one of the many channel in which the energy of an age discharges itself; in its political movements, religious thoughts, philosophical speculation, art, we have the same energy overflowing into other forms of expression.⁶

³Hudson, William Henry: *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (P) Ltd., 2023, p-33

⁴ *Ibid*, pp-35-36

⁵ *Ibid*

⁶*Ibid. pp-35-37*

The study of English literature, for example, will thus take us out into the wide field of English history, by which we mean the history of English politics and society, manners and customs, culture and learning, and philosophy and religion. However diverse the characteristics which make up the sum-total of the life of an epoch, these, like the qualities which combine in an individual, are not, as Taine puts it, merely 'juxtaposed they are interrelated and interdependent. Our aim must therefore be to correlate the literature of any age we may take for consideration with all the other important aspects of the national activity of the time.'⁷ Therefore through the study of Bodo Literature, it can come to knowledge of Bodo society. The social status, activities of the society, the interrelation between people and the society are reflected through the literature of the said community.

Short story is a part of literature and so, it also reflects the society and its social picture. As the campus of the short story is very limited it cannot show the society as a whole but a slice of it and its fragmental social pictures. In Zaraphagla's short stories too some pictures of the Bodo society are reflected. This socio-cultural pictures and reflection of the economic condition of the Bodos through the short stories of Zaraphagla will be discussed as given below.

4.2 Socio-cultural pictures reflected in the stories

The English word society is derived from 'the French Societe', which had its origin in the Latin *societas*, a 'friendly association with others,' from *socius* meaning 'companion, associate, comrade or business partner.' Thus, the meaning of society is closely related to what is considered to be social.⁸ The Bodo people also formed their society with their constituent members with its distinct social and cultural behaviour. The Bodos as an ethnic group of Assam or North East India, they have different customs, festivals and religions.

Human society is an organized community. Few definitions of society are mentioned here for the understanding of the term of society.

⁷Hudson, William Henry: *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*(2023), Atlantic Publishers and Distributors (P) Ltd., 2023, pp-.37-38

⁸ *Wikipedia*.<https://en.wikipedia.org>

1. Society means a large group of people who live in the same country or area and have the same laws, traditions, etc.⁹
2. It has a close relation with human organization. Society means an organization for people who have the same interest.¹⁰
3. It is a social way of living. Society means system whereby people live together in organized communities: social way of living.¹¹
4. It is a shared living in the society. Society means particular grouping of humanity with shared customs, laws, etc.¹²

So, the Bodo society means a large group of Bodo people living in the same area or country having the same laws, traditions, etc. and who have the same interest and who share common customs, laws etc. in the social way of living. Madhuram Boro says—

‘The Mongoloid Boros are one of the aboriginal tribes of the Bodo race living mainly in Assam and its neighboring Indian states like Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal Bihar, Manipur, Tripura and foreign countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan.’¹³

On the other hand, culture is the most important element in human society. The shared customs of individuals in a society, community, or group are reflected as a culture. Transmitted habitual experiences of human beings are the culture in sociology. It includes every branch of social activities, both practical and psychological. The Bodo society is characterized by a very distinct culture of the ancient period based on societal beliefs, ideas, and norms related to the various kinds of social practice in their daily livelihood. However, there have been very ancient cultures and traditions in the Bodo society, which is unavoidable for the Bodo people in their livelihood. They have their distinct food habits, religious practice, and belief. The celebration of various kinds of festivals such as wedding ceremonies, kherai worship, bwisagu and others, all these are

⁹ *Cambridge Essential English Dictionary*, Cambridge University Press, 1999, p-299

¹⁰ *ibid.*, p-299

¹¹ A.S. Hornby: *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, 2000, p-1213

¹² *Ibid*, p.1214

¹³ Boro Madhuram : *The History of the Boro Literature*, Hajo: Priyadini Publication, 1990, p-1

the main aspects of life in the Bodo society, which can be defined as the way of life for the Bodo people. The Bodos are culturally very rich which is picturized by Zaraphag;a in his fiction writings.

4.2.1 *Gunda*

A short story can be a fable or a parable, real or fantasy, a true presentation or a parody and sentimental or satirical serious in intent, or a slight hearted division, it can be any of these, but to be memorable, it must catch the eternal in the casual, invest a moment with the immensity of time.¹⁴

Gunda consists of four short stories namely *Rwikhagiri*, *Gunda*, *Zwmwngara* and *Habilani Zengna*, *Zengnani Habila*. In Every story, there is a social message and social scene. As an individual, as a member of a society, people have many responsibilities. For example, the responsibility can be accordingly as a human being, as a farmer, as a devotee, as a hunter and maybe as a saviour of this earth. The following social aspects seen in the stories is explained.

4.2.1.1 *Rwikhagiri (The Protector)*

A writer gives a clear direction to a society and the society finds a clue from him. The basic philosophy of the society guides the writers and in turn with their imaginative touch, reasoning and judiciousness counsels of the society and guides its progress. Bodo people are generally very simple. They always want to live in peace, eating & drinking. They like to eat pork, they like to drink alcohol. For which the other castes insult the Bodos. The Bodos do not pay attention in other matters. It is seen in this story with this conversation between husband and wife, Sabharam and Bimala

: *मिनियाब्ला माथो खालामनो? आंनि बाथाखौ खोनानानै मख'जानाय नेताफ्रा आंखौ सब
होननानैनो बुंगोन। गोदो हारसाफ्रा बर'खौ मा बुंनानै जंखायोमोन मिथिगौ- बरखेब वूक्कि
गाछे, सुसाब देखिले शप्पे, बप देखिले नाछे। मेसनि मेलेमआ बिफाडाव थायो, अमा*

¹⁴Iswarin, S. Manjeri 'By Way of Preface', *A Madras Admiral.*, 1959, p- x

नुब्ला बिसोर हादे हादे मिनियो, जौ नुब्ला बाजल' बाजल' मोसायो। बाथाखौ दाबो नंगौ
नंगौ मोनो, नडासै?¹⁵

English Rendering:

: *What to do without laughing? Listening my words, the mentioned leaders will say me as Snob. Do you know the other community people how does say about the Bodos- Brains of Bodo people are kept in trees, they laugh when they see pig, they dance when they see Alcohol. May be the sentence is correct till now, isn't?*

This dialogue is not showing only that Bodo people are lazy, but it also shows the difference of thinking between Bodo and other castes.

According to Joseph Conrad 'Fiction is history, human history, or it is nothing. But it is also more than that; it stands on firmer ground, being based on the reality of forms and the observation of social phenomena, whereas history is based on documents and the reading of print and handwriting on second-hand impression. Thus fiction is nearer truth.'¹⁶

Earlier Bodo people gave an Aryan name to their children. But nowadays the present generation loves taking original Bodo names i.e. Bodo basic words. Such as, the story **Rwikhagiri** expresses the same.

This same theme is also reflected in the story **Barmwdai (The Tornado)**. People want to change their name in origin Bodo word.

: बेव मानि जथुम्मा जादों नौथां?

: बड़नि!-----मानसिया गोग्गायै फिनबाय।

¹⁵Zaraphagla, *Rwikhagiri*, Gunda, Kokrajhar: Omeh Publications, 2014, p-16

¹⁶ <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/9502043>

: बड़नि मा?...?

: नोंथांआ सोर?

: आं कालिकिंकर !

: खालिखिंकर...!बड़' ना हारसा?

: बिमा-बिफाया आंनियाबो बड़'आनो नोंथां।

: मुंआ मानोथो हारसानि?

: गोदो गुदि फरायसालियाव हारसा मास्टर दोननायानो थालांदोंलै नोंथां।

: दालाय मानोथो सोलायनानै लायाखै? जेरावबो जेरैथिंबो बड़ बड़ मोनामफुंहोथारनो
हायाब्ला राइजोखौ मोननाया गोब्राब दड़ होननाय बाथ्राखौ नोंथांआ खोनायाखै?¹⁷

English Rendering:

: What meeting is going on here?

: Bodo's.... The man replied proudly.

: Bodo's what...?

: Who are you?

: I'm Kalikingkar.

: Khalikhingkar..? Bodo or Assamese?

: My parents are also belongs to Bodo.

: Then why the name isin Assamese?

: The Assamese teacher of our primary school kept my name.

¹⁷Zaraphagla, Barmwdai, Dantharu, Kokrajhar: Danali Publications, 2004,p-41

: Then why are you not changing this time? If we cannot surplus of Bodonism everywhere then the Separate State will be not happening. Do you hear about it or not?

For their own identity, Bodo people are fighting for a separate state. They want to introduce themselves on their own. They have been living under other's feet for years. Now Bodos want their own identity, own land and want to live with full dignity. Therefore they want to make Bodonism everywhere. This feeling of nationalism is reflected in this way in the stories of Zaraphagla. Zaraphagla talks about the Bodo revolution in many of his stories and he also describes the different sides of this revolution.

Parents are always very conscious about their children. If there is a daughter in it, then she is forced to think on many other issues. If the daughter gets a bad name, then the parents cannot be free from shame. This kind of thinking happens in the society of every community. Here is a dialogue of Sabharam to Police Officer-

*: इसे सिक्रेसि मेनटेइन खालामदो नौथां। हिन्जावनि फिसा। मानइज्जतनि बाथाखौबो -
साननांगौ जायो।¹⁸*

Englsih Rendering:

: Kindly maintain the secrecy. It's a girl. It is a question of her dignity.

The people of the Bodos are generally non-vegetarian. They have many non-veg in their food table. The eat snails. Snail curry with lentil is the food habit of the Bodo people. This food habit is shown in this story.

¹⁸Zaraphagla. *Rwikhagiri, Gunda*, Kokrajhar: Omeh Publications, 2014, p-26

Sometimes things are told through proverb. Social proverbs contain life philosophies and experience as well as moral standards; aspects of social life are reflected in the mirror of social proverbs. Social proverbs are of both language and culture. There are various such proverbs of the Bodos, through which the depth of philosophy is explained. Zaraphagla used such proverbs in the story through the characters.

4.2.1.2 *Gunda*

In the story *Gunda* too, the picture of the poor Bodo society is screened up. When Pranita's father died, as the eldest daughter of the family, Pranita was trying to raise up her family with a small salary. At the same time greedy people like Nandeswar Dekha came to their house and told them that his father had borrowed a loan from him. Now it's the time to recover that loan and if they are unable to pay that loan then he will take another idea. So he told his idea to Pranita's mother as that if Pranita will marry him, then all problems will be solved. Though Pranita's qualifications are more than him, it will not be a matter. After the marriage of Pranita and Nandeswar, Pranita can continue her job and Rakesh also can continue his education.

As per the story *Gunda*, it is observed that the people from Bodo Community are exploited by other castes. Taking a loan by mortgaging some of own property is a tradition of society. This tradition has been going on in Bodo society from earlier times. People are literate or illiterate; they borrow money from other people by mortgaging their property. This story has also shown this social issue, where it is seen from a dialogue was given by Nandeswar Dekha in front of Pranita and Pranita's mother.

: बेखौनथ बुंनो फैदो आं। रांखो नयन लादोब्लाबो आंनि रादाया आदा सुबधजोसो।
नोसोरनि न आरो हाखो बन्धक होनानैसो लादो बियो रांखो।

: गासैबो लेखाफरा आरो हानि पाट्टाया आंनावनो दं। नोंसोरखौ नाथाय बेनि थाखाय
 खैफोदाव खोखलैनो आं सानाखै। बुजा-बुजिनि गेजेरजोंसो माबा मोनसे खालामजागोन
 होननानै आं सानो। जाययखिजाया दा थांथ नोसै आं। उनाव मोजाडै रायलायफैगोन।¹⁹

English Rendering:

: I have come to tell you this. Nayan has taken the money but the agreement was with brother Subodh. He borrowed money only by mortgaging your house and land.

: I also have all the agreement papers and land papers. But because of this I am not going to trouble you. I think something can be done through compromise. I'll go now. Will talk well later.

Giving thanks in return for gratitude is not only a religion of human being but also a culture. Naba as a friend of Rakesh helped Rakesh's family from various side. He helped Pranita in getting job, buying new home in a new place and in taking higher study of Rakesh too. So Pranita wanted to meet Naba once and say thanks to him. Felicitation for service rendering is a nature of human being. Such kind of picture is also seen. Pranita was invited Naba at their home and felicite him.

4.2.1.3 Zwmwngara

In the story *Zwmwngara (the useless)* also, the writer tried to show some pictures of Bodo society. Bodo society still believes that those women with physically strong and dark-coloured skin are of ill character with dirty minds. In the case of Sushmita who is called as Swmkhe, people have the same thought. People brought up different issues on Sushanta, a young handsome Bodo youth on marrying a dark-skinned woman. Gossiping on a newly married woman is a picture of village women. The story also tells that business is not a job for Bodo

¹⁹Zaraphagla, *Gunda, Gunda*, Kokrajhar: Omeh Publications. 2014, p-38

youth and is portrayed through Arga, Swmkhe spent a lot of money and established a grocery for Arga expecting a better life for him. But unfortunately, Arga spent his days drinking wine and also gave always the products on credit and held a great loss. Later at the affording Swmkhe, Arga got the job of Chowkider at school and somehow could lead his life. But still for his children's needs he had to spread his hands to Swmkhe. The Bodo parents are usually very kind and soft-hearted. That is why when Kharphati's son-in-law asked one lakh rupees to establish a business she started looking for loan without giving a second thought. Now, a day it is seen that the Bodo has also followed the trends of giving dowry on their daughter's wedding. It is understood that the male always like to dominate the female and they feel neglected of once they had to give a leg massage to their wives.

Here is a dialogue related to such kind of issue:

आइऔ....। बेवहाय जेबो द'ष जाया होननानैसो बुंबाय नोडो? जायखौ नौं आथिं दांनानै
खुलुमनांगौ बिखौसो उल्ठा आथिं दांहोयोब्ला बेनोथ' अनागार, बेनोथ' फाप। नौंसोरबादि
एफाबांमानि लेखागोरौफ्रानो बेबादि अनागार खालामोब्ला समाजखौलाय मानोथोबाव-?"
इसे खान्नां गारांजौनो बुंथारबाय खार्फाथिया।²⁰

English Rendering:

: Oh! You have said it's nothing, you should bow down, instead you are made to bow down, this is a sin, and it's a crime. If the educated like you commits such crime then what is the necessary of the society? Kharphati cried out loudly.

Beating husband is a sin; this is the thinking of society. No matter how much the husband commits, the wife cannot beat her husband. Because Bodo society is a patriarchal society. In a patriarchal society, women are always dominated by men. Wives are always under the husband. They have to respect and obey their husbands. If wives do something without permission of their

²⁰Zaraphagla. Zwmwngara, Gunda, Kokrajhar: Omeh Publications, 2014, p-85

husband it will be punishable and beating husband is a sin. Such kind of issues reflected from this dialogue-

: हामानो फाग्लि फिसाइखौ बुनो। राइजोआ मोनथिब्ला दन्ड फोनांनानै
उद्रायहोजागोनबो नॉसोर²¹

English Rendering:

: *Hey crazy you can't beat husband, too. If the people of the village come to know, then along with punishing you, they will also get purification done.*

Swmkhe though indirectly told her husband and Kharpati's husband about the son-in-law and his issues, that they should find some ways to solve the problem instead of giving money for no good reason. At this, Kharpati was disheartened and annoyed. She thinks that Swmkhe helps Hainashri without reason because she is her own. Swmkhe also financed her brother-in-law Ananta in doing contract works. But she is selfish. She doesn't want to give money to Kharphati's son-in-law. She doesn't want Kharphati's son-in-law's upgradation. Therefore she is against Kharphati's son-in-law. Kharphati expressed all this unhappiness in front of Hainashri. Hainashri was surprised to see Kharphati's thinking. She feels that Kharphati's thinking is helping her son-in-law to deteriorate.

Bodo people have a tradition, whenever a guest comes to the house, serve tea for them. Along with this, betel nut is also given in the hospitality. This picture is depicted in this story.

²¹Zaraphagla, Zwmwngara, Gunda, Kokrajhar: Omeh Publications, 2014, p-84

4.2.1.4 *Habilani Zengna, Zengnani Habila*

(Problems of the Desire, Desire of the Problems)

Habilani Zengna, Zengnani Habila (Problems of the Desire, Desire of the Problems) is a story of an educated couple who yearns for a son in spite of having three daughters. How educated one maybe they believe that ojha could solve their problem by offering pujas, giving some herbal medicines or some spiritual thread. They also believe that Ojah could make the impossible to possible. That is why Rabin a PWD clerk also gets close to a Muslim ojha Altab Hussain in the hope of a job promotion and a son. Though Lalita came to know about the Ojah and his character from her friends, to fulfil her husband's wishes as a wife she kept silent as other women did. For her husband, Lalita handed over her to the Ojah Altab Hussain. Altab Hussain has a weakness in women and when women go to him for treatment he touches women's bodies. He has four wives. He touches women shamelessly in the name of treatment. Despite knowing this crime, they do not raise their voice and do not even tell their husbands about it.

Women want their husbands to know about everything they do. The desire to inform the husband about everything lives in his heart. But when husbands do not think about their wives, then wives also get spoiled, and they start hiding things from their husbands. Therefore, Bina, angry with her husband, also spoke

: बिनो खिन्थानानैलाय माथो जाबावनो! गासैबो बाश्वाखौ हौवाफोरनो एलु-एला
खिन्थाजोबजायाहाय। अजाया नायनानै मुलि हरबाय, दा बेरामआ हामबानो जाबाय।²²

English Rendering:

: It's of no use talking to him, we should sometimes not tell in details to our husband. The disease gets cured by ojah's medicines that enough.

²²Zaraphagla, *Habilani Zengna, Zengnani Habila, Gunda*, Kokrajhar: Omeh Publications, 2014, p-98

After marriage, a husband has full responsibilities to his wife. Because many relationships come together with a marriage. A husband has a responsibility to fulfil his wife's needs. But sometimes due to some difficulty, husbands cannot fulfil this. Husbands think that women need only money. They are happy with only money. They want luxury life, so they need more money. After a certain age, when husbands cannot fulfil their wives' needs, then they want to keep their wives happy with money. They think money is everything to fulfil all the desires of women. Rabin also thinks so. The writer has described this matter through the character of Rabin.

Despite being educated, Bodo people sometimes trust Ojha a lot. They think that even a sick which doctor cannot cure, Kabiraj can cure it. Any problem at home or in the office, that Babaji or saint can solve it. Babaji removes all problems by giving amulet, giving some medicines or by chanting mantras. Rabin is also an educated person. But he thinks that one kabiraj or ojha will be able to solve his problems. A contractor tells him that they have a kabiraj living near their village. Many people including political leaders are also go there. So, he also wants to meet that ojha. Despite being educated, this is a sample of a victim of blind faith.

: बिसालिपाराथिं सासे मोजां बांगाल अजा दंनोलै लथा। हरैथिंजाइनि सासे बांगाल
थिकादारआ खिन्थादों आंनो। जों ओजोंनि गोबाडानो थाडोनो। अफिसार आरो
नेताफोरसिन्थाइनो थाडो होनदों। जोंबो थांनानै नाइदिनि थु। गाबोन सेकेन्द सेटारडे ,
गाबोननो थांनोसै।²³

English Rendering:

: Lalita, come to learn that there is a good Muslim Ojah in Bilasipara. A Muslim contractor on that side told me this. Many people go from here. I have heard that officers and leaders also go. Let us also go and see. Tomorrow is second Saturday, let's go tomorrow.

²³Zaraphagla. *Habilani Zengna, Zengnani Habila Gunda*, Kokrajhar: Omeh Publications, 2014, p-93

Rabin also believes that his promotion which has stopped and the one who is only giving birth to a daughter, the solution to this problem is also with Babaji. . So he tells his wife Lalita that they should go to a Muslim babaji from whom they can get both their promotion and son. Be it a leader or an officer, there are many victims of such misconception. They are going to Babaji to find a solution to every problem of life. The writer has tried to focus on this kind of issue of society through his story.

4.2.2 Banalata

In *Banalata* there are four short stories. The social pictures reflected in these stories nicely. It is say that literature acts as a form of expression for each individual writer. Literature presents a picture of what people think, say and do in the society. Zaraphagla's short story creations are also not far from of that. Because society influence on the writer and the writers explore it by their writings.

4.2.2.1 Guthal

The uses of folk medicine in Bodo society are available. The faith on traditional folk medicine is very strong in Bodo Society. Though people become educated, but for some diseases, the Bodo people want to apply folk medicines instead of allopathic. This is reflected through this conversation between Ratan and Indranil in the story *Guthal*.

: आदा। आदै हंलाया चगखानि मुलि रोंगौनो। चगखाखौनो टाइफयेड बुडा होमबा?
 आदैया खोनानानै मुलि खानो ओंखारलांबाय। जाग्रा बडिजों लोगोसे थालोयाव बर्हमबो
 होनांगौ होनदों। बह्मआसो आसोलनो। आं जन्डिसनि कबिराजी मुलिखौबो लाइखाबाय
 आदा। थबे जन्डिसनि मुलिखौ आदै हंलायाबो रोंगौनो। आदैया मुलि देखांब्लानो गावबो
 थांनो होनदों। आं मा खालामनो? आदैखौ लानानै थांनोसै?

: आदैया चगखानि मुलि रोंगौ? बेथ' जोबोद मोजां बाथा। नों फैनो नाडा। बाइक एबा मारुटिखौ लानानै खामानिफोरखौ इसे नाइदिहैयो। मुलिखौ आं लायगोन²⁴

English Rendering:

: Elder Brother, uncle knows how to make medicine for chagkha. Chagkha is called typhoid, isn't it? Along with tablet, it is also important to apply balm. Balm is the origin one. I have also brought Kaviraji medicine for jaundice. He will go himself after making the medicine. What will I do? Should I go along with uncle?
: Uncle knows to make chagkha's medicine? It's very good. You do not need to come. You watch the works by taking Bike or Car. I will bring the medicine.

Pork is the traditional food item of the Bodos. In the food habit of Bodo, a variety types of dishes are made of pork. The special dish made with pig's blood, intestine and heart is known as *Khaji* and whenever a family of the same village kills a pig or goat, the people of neighbours and relatives are also invited. This social bonding is very strong in earlier Bodo society. Community fishing and community hunting are a tradition of the Bodo society. Community eating as well as jointly eating along with their relatives is also a tradition of the Bodos. Such a picture is described in this story-

....फारानिनो नखरसेहा अमा सिथारनायाव बिबु-बिथैनि खाजि जानो लिंनानै लांफैदों बिखौ²⁵.....

English Rendering:

A pig had been killed in a family of the same village, so to eat the dish made by pig's blood and intestine, he is called by.

²⁴Zaraphagla.Guthal, Banalata, Kokrajhar: Words & Words, 2020, p-16

²⁵ Zaraphagla, Banalata(2020), Words & Words, Guthal, p-4

4.2.2.2 Banalata

According to great Marxist aesthethician Georg Lukács (1885-1971) '*Literature should not only represent the social reality but also present the social structure, with an insight into its very organization with a prophetic sense of future and direct its development.*'²⁶

Every parent wants their children to establish themselves. So they try to give a lesson to their children. In story *Banalata*, Mrigen also tried to teach the actual meaning of life to his son Abhijit-

: हारिनि थाखाय साननांगौ मावनांगौ बेयो मोजां बाथा। आंहा बेवहाय जेबो अजद गैया।
नाथाय नौ सिगां गावखौ दानानै लागोनांगोन। गावनि बिथाखौ गोखौ खालामगोनांगोन।
दा नौहा गावखौ दानायनि, गावनि बिथाखौ सोरजिनायनि फोगोमनायनि सम। आरो बे
समआ इयुनाव माब्लाबाबो फैफिननाय नडा। बे समावनो नौ गावखौ गावनि आथिडाव
गसंनो हानायबादि गोखौ खालामनो हायाब्ला इयुनाव हानाय नडा आरो गावनो गावनि
आथिडाव गसंनो हायाब्ला हारिखौ बोरै फोथानो, बोरै बोखानो हानो? रानायनि सिगां
गोल्लै बैसोयाव हारि आरो हादरनि गिदिर खामानियाव बारसोमब्ला नोडो जागोन
लर्हायनाय। बेनि उनाव नोडो सेवगोन। अब्ला नौ हालआवबो थाडा मैयावबो थाडा,
जेरावबो उदायरोडै समाजनि जेना जानानै थागोन। गावखौ लानानै नौ गावनो आफस'स
खालामबाय थानांगोन। फंसे बाथाखौ जेब्लाबो गोसोआव लाखि - सासे मोजां नोगोरारि
जानायानो हारि आरो हादर सिबिनायनि गिबि चर्त ।²⁷

English Rendering:

²⁶ <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lukacs/index.htm>

²⁷ Zaraphagla, Guthal, *Banalata*, Kokrajhar: Words & Words, 2020, pp-57-58

: Thinking and working for the community are all good things. I have no objection to this. But you have to build yourself up first. We have to strengthen our own ground. This is your time to create yourself, to create yourself ground, to develop it. And this time will never come back in the future. If you cannot fortify yourself strongly enough to stand on your own feet at this time, you will not be able to do so in the future. If you will not be able to strengthen yourself, how will you raise the community, make yourself stronger before you sail yourself for a big job like working for your community and country, then that will be your withering. After that you will rot. Then you will be no use. You will remain a worthless burden to society; you will remain as problem for the society. You will continue to regret yourself. One thing to always remember being a good citizen is the first condition of serving condition of serving your community and country.

Sometimes age gap also becomes a barrier in the marriage system. If the girl is older than the boy, then the family does not agree to marriage easily. And even if the girl is a little fat in appearance, she is stout, and then the question arises above them. Banalata's body was stout in appearance and she was also fat. Because of this people felt that she had become very old. She is older than Abhijit. She is older in age, so perhaps Abhijit does not want to marry her. The people are guessing their age difference. Such kind of picture is there in the society. It is not only in Bodo but also as a whole. Here is a dialogue-

: आच्छा, बनलताया बैसोयाव नॉनिखुय देरसिन?

: नडा, बोसोरसे फुरा नडाब्लाबो आं इसे देरसिन। मानो?

: नडा। नाइनानै नाथाय बिखौसो देरसिनबादि नुयो।

: हारदांया मानसि। दा मोदोमबो खाबाय इसे, बेनि सायाव फोरोंगिरिनिगोमजोर मोखां।

²⁸Zaraphagla, Banalata, Banalata, Kokrajhar: Words& Words, 2020, p-81

English Rendering:

: *Well, is Banalata older than you in age?*

: *No, I am one year older, not fully one year but am older. Why?*

: *No., she seems to be the older than you.*

: *A robust lady. Now have also gained some weight, to top up being a teacher bears a stern look.*

The Bodos are made liquor at home. For this, a stove of three pillars is made which is called in Bodo 'Ogdab'. Put a vessel on top of the stove and put rice-water there and first cook the liquor rice. In this story, along with showing this site, if any three people are found, then they are compared with the stove of three pillars.

There is a faith in Bodo society that bowing in front of same age is not acceptable. Therefore when Lilabati bowed to her same age Rina, Rina said-

: *फाग्लिसो नोडो। गावजों समानखौनो खुलुमो सोरबा?*²⁹

English Rendering:

: *You're crazy too. Have people of the same age also touched their feet?*

In Bodo society, usually boys take alcohol. Generally, boys or men take more alcohol than girls or women. Among them, some obey their elders as well as their parents. Abhijit does not take drink in front of his parents. He drinks with his friends or sometimes alone. Although the parents do not know about this, but the sisters and sister-in-laws are aware of this. Sometimes some women also take alcohol secretly with their in-laws and no one even knows. Very much taking alcohol is not good. But in Bodo society maximum people take alcohol. Young boys and girls are also taking it very much. The author has shown such pictures in his short story.

²⁹Zaraphagla, *Banalata, Banalata*, Kokrajhar: Words & Words, 2020, p-71

The Bodo people are mostly the cultivators. Cultivation is the primary sector of the Bodo society for their livelihood. Every family grows some vegetables. And sometimes if a poor person has no place to plant vegetables in his house, then he definitely sends some vegetables from the house of those whose house he goes. Abhijit also told his sister-in-law to give some vegetables to Boloram's wife who came for treatment in the pharmacy of Abhijit.

: बारियाव मा मा मैगंथाइगं दं इसे हरहोदो बाजै। लांनानै जाहैथों- !³⁰

English Rendering:

: *What vegetables are in the kitchen garden please give to her sister-in-law. Let's them take it away.*

4.2.2.3 Songsar

In every society, there are various customs. Such kind of customs have been made in Bodo society too. These kinds of customs are controlled the society in a disciplined manner. People have to follow the rules of the society. In Bodo society, there is a ritual that a son or daughter can not sleep with their parents when they grow up. Daughters do not sleep with their parents after their first menstruation, in the same way, sons do not sleep. If a mother sleeps with her elder son, then society criticises them.

Lallu had crossed the age of sleeping together with his parents. But sometimes such a condition comes in life; sometimes the rituals of the society may also have to be broken. The same thing happened with Lallu's mother Laogi. She had lost her husband suddenly at a young age, so she was very sad. In this time of grief, she took her son with her while sleeping and also while going somewhere. Lallu also realized his age is already crossed the sleeping age with his mother. However, due to the sudden demise of her husband, Laogi wanted her son to sleep with her. Lallu tells himself this story to the readers.

³⁰ Ibid, P-68

: आं अब्ला बिमाजों उन्दुनायनि बैसोखौ माब्लाबानो बारबोबाय। नाथाय बै अलखदनि
समाव आं हारसिं उन्दुनो हाया होननानै आइआनो आंखौ गावजों फुथुफादों। जेरावखि
थाडा आंखौ लांफादों।³¹

English Rendering:

*: I have barely crossed the sleep age with my mother then. But my mother took me
along with her because she said she couldn't sleep alone during this grief. Takes
me with her everywhere*

Having a child after getting married is a natural process. After one or two years of marriage, everyone expects that a third member will come into their life too. But when a couple does not give birth to a child even after several years of marriage, then society notices them. Laoga also married Laogi, so that he could save Laogi from the hands of those goons. But there was no husband-wife relationship between Laoga and Laogi. It was just a contractual marriage. Therefore, there was not a single sample in Laogi that she is becoming a mother again. So when some women from the village came to Laogi's house for community work, they took a chance, therefore they asked Laoga. They told Laoga that if a couple do not become parents there may be some problems in their health. But they do not think that Laoga is an unhealthy man. Therefore they want to know the reason behind it. But Laoga did not tell them anything.

Every society has various types of marriage systems. Thus various types of marriage systems in the Bodo society too. One of the traditions of marriage is called *HathasuniHaba*, where the bride puts the first rice on the plate of her future husband considering as a husband in front of all the villagers and the groom accepts the bride as his wife after eating that rice. There is another wedding custom where the bride and groom sit in front of the fire pit and the Pandit chanting mantra binds them in marriage. Nowadays sometimes it is happening by court marriage, where

³¹Zaraphagla, *Songsar, Banalata*, Kokrajhar: Words& Words, 2020, p-96

lawyers get married and they become legal husband and wife. All these rituals of marriage have been explained very well in this story by Lallu to his mother and Laoga.

: हाथासुनि होनाय हाबायाबो हाबा। बेखायनो नोंसोरनि हाबाया जाखानाय। नाथाय आथिखालाव हाबाया खनथामजोंसो फुरा जासै। बेखौ दानि मानसिफोरनि लाक्सारीबो बुंजायो। सिगां फारनैनिबो सुबिदानि थाखाय सरासनसायै बबेबा मन्दिराव हाबा जायो, बेनि उनाव गावबा गावनि नेमबादियै हौवानि नवाव हुमयजयानो जा एबा बाथौनि - नेमजोंनो जा मोनसे हाबा जाबावो आरो रेजिस्ट्रेशनआथ सरखारनि आइनखा। बेखौ खालामखानांगौ। दा नोंसोरनि हाबाया हाथासुनिनि नेमजों जाखानायहौवा-हिन्जावखासै, नोंसोर। थेवबो गोसोआ हास्थायदों जेब्ला मन्दिराव थांनानै बेनो फुजा बेनो हाबा खालामबानो जोबबाय³²

English Rendering:

: The HathasuniHaba also is a kind of marriage. So, your marriage is already done. But now, the marriage is only completed after three times. It is also called the luxury of modern people. For the convenience of both of family, the marriage is usually solemnized in a temple, followed by a rituals marriage in the home of groom, whether it is a yagya or a ritual of Bathousim, and registration is the official duty of the government, it has to be done Now that your marriage is done according to Hathsuni rituals, you both already husband and wife. However, the heart desires that when one goes to the temple and you can worship too and marriage too, it's over.

There is a rite to pay homage to their deceased person in the Bodo society. Even after that, similar reverence is given in his death anniversary, on which day after worshipping, the people of

³²Zaraphagla, Songsar, Banalata, Kokrajhar: Words& Words, 2020, p-121

the village are fed. Not only this, homage is done in the name of the deceased before every auspicious work. For that, the priest is called and people are hired to make the dish of various dishes. This custom is found in this story. When Lallu talked about the marriage of his mother and Laoga, his mother Laogi told to Lallu and Laoga that she want to pay homage in the name of his death husband.

: बयनिबो सिगां आं नोम्फानो खेबसे बाउसानो लुबैयो।

: आं दौरिखौ मैयानो बुंहेखाबाय। गामिनि मानसिखौबो बुंनाय जाजोबबायोनसै। थाक-
थियारिखौ समफोरनि सानसुआवफोजोबगोन। बे बोसोराव इसे गिदिर खालामनो
साननानै अमा, बोरमा आरो नानि बाहेनाबो होनानै दोनखाबाय³³

English Rendering:

: First of all I would like to give a bow to your father.

: I already informed dauri yesterday The people of the village were also even informed. The preparation will be completed in the afternoon of time. Planning to make it a little bigger this year, so already paid advance for the supplies of pork, mutton and fish.

There is a custom of community work. Whether it is to do the farm or build the house or coat the house with mud which is called “Saori janai” in Bodo. In community work, there is no payment system. The house owner is not to pay them. Community work is like an entertainment. Sometimes they discuss various topics along with working, earlier it has prevailed but nowadays this system is decreasing. The author depicted this kind of work in this story. Lallu has explained to the readers about this.

³³Ibid, p-123

: सानसेखालि जौहानि माय गाइनायनि सावरिमोन। सावरि लिनो थांनाय समावनो
 खार्फाथि मुंनि सासे बिबाजै जानाया बुंखादोनो- “फिसिनाय दंब्ला गाइखांनानै मंगाहोनो
 थाखाय बथल गिदिरजों बथलसे लाखाहाइ लाउगा आगै ,नोंसोरहानि बै दुब्लिनिफ्राय
 फेफिननांगौआ गोजानथार” होननानै ³⁴.....

English Rendering:

...One day we had a saori for planting paddy. While going to call for Saori, a woman named Kharphati, who is Laoga's sister-in-law in the relation, said - If there is homemade country liquor, then take a full bottle in the field itself. Your house is far from Field. Fatigue will disappear.

The divorce system is also there in the Bodo society. Sidney Endle said, “Divorce sometimes takes place by mutual consent, but cannot be affected without a certain formality. Man and wife appear before the village elders and state their case, concluding by tearing a pan-leaf into two pieces, fathoi besinai (in Bodo) pan chira (in Assamese), a symbolic act indicating that, as the sundered leaf can never reunite, so their own married life is severed forever.”³⁵

If there is any problem in the relationship after someone's marriage, then there is a custom of tearing the paan or betel leaf and divorcing each other. Only after divorce, the boy or girl can marry again. To give divorce, the village head and some people of the village are called and the breakdown of the relationship is announced only by tearing the betel leaves. This custom of Bodo society is also reflected in this story. Everyone knew that Laoga was Laogi's husband. After knowing this, no one will agree to marry Laoga. That's why Laogi wanted to divorce Laoga. She wanted to call the village head and some people of the village and give divorce to Laoga by doing *Phathwilai Bisinai* i.e. tearing betel leaf in front of them.

³⁴Zaraphagla, *Songsar, Banalata*, Kokrajhar: Words& Words, 2020, p-104

³⁵ Endle, Sidney, *The Kacharis*, London: **Low Price Publications** , 1911,P-31

4.2.2.4 Ziuni Khobam

Lucy Mair said ‘Marriage has been defined as a union between a man and a woman such that children born to the woman are recognized legitimate offspring of both parents. Marriage creates new social relationships and reciprocal rights between the spouses, between each and the kin of the other, and establishes what will be the rights and status of the children when they are born. Every society has recognized procedures for creating such relationships and rights, and for making it known that they have been created.’³⁶

Marriage is a bond bound by society. Generally, the consent of both the boy and the girl is asked for marriage. The elder people of the house take responsibility for marriage. They fix the wedding day. This is the custom in Bodo society too. After eight days of marriage, there is a custom of going to the girl's house as a guest, which is called *Aathmangal* i.e. *Pag Phere*. Urmila was also brought up by marrying in the same way. Consent was taken from her before marriage. Then after that when she went home for a *pagphere* or *athmangal*, she did not return from home. Somehow it is happening; this case is very rare in Bodo society. Urmila sat in marriage with Banda on her own free will. Going to parent's house for the *athmangal* and refusing to come back to the husband's house raises many questions. Without knowing the reason why Urmila doesn't want to come back to her husband's house, Banda's family is in a dilemma. So after getting the result of APSC, Banda wanted clarification on this. If nothing happens then he wants to divorce her *Phathwilai Bisinai*. The social pictures of both the marriage and divorce system have been depicted in this story.

Bodo people don't like to drink alone while taking rice beer. Whether it is sorrow or happiness, everyone drinks rice beer together. In the evening, take a large pot of wine and pour water there, drink prepared. To prepare this drink or rice beer servant or maid of the house called off. They serve all the materials to the person who will prepare the rice beer like this- water in a jug, glass and strainer to drain wine and any meat or vegetables to eat with rice beer.

³⁶Extracted from Brahma, Kameswar, *Aspects of Social customs of the Bodos*. Kokrajhar, 1995, p-

4.2.3 *Dantharu*

The writers want to give a message from their writings. Because writer also from the society. And society is the main source of the writings. Dantharu, there are seven story collections. There are various socio-cultural and economy issues are reflected from each story.

4.2.3.1 *Rajkhanthini Rajmistri*

There is a servant system in the Bodo society. When it is needed for household worker then the Bodos take man servant (*Dahwna*) and maid (*Ruwathi*) against payment. *Dahwna* is a male who stays against giving salary, particularly in terms of the agriculture sector. On the other hand, *ruwathi* is a female or girl who stays for some months or years and serves in the family, particularly in terms of household sectors such as cooking, taking care of the family, and others. In the Bodo society, mostly those people, especially rich people, offer this work, and the poor people serve as servants. Mostly the servants are mainly poor people who are not able to lead a good life and those who have no wealth or income. In many stories by Zaraphagla, servants take a main role. Bodo people, who are needy for servants, go to the villages in search of servants. When the owner asks the maid, if she will stay in their house or not, then the maid also asks the owner again about their family. How much salary will be taken in a month, it is also fixed on the same day. This picture is beautifully picturised in the story *Rajkhanthini Rajmistri (The Mason of Politics)*. Rajen asked Ruphali if she wanted to stay as a maid in his home or not.

: नॉ रुवाथि थाफिनला रुफालि?

: माहाजोन मोजां मोनब्ला थागोन।

: माहाजोन मोजांआ माबादि? जॉफोरबादिया जागोनना जाया?

: नआव सोर सोर दं? –साखि होयाया साखि नाइगिरयाखौ इन्टारभिउ लानाय बायदि
सोंफामदों रुफालिया राजेननाव³⁷

English Rendering:

: Will you avail for servant Ruphali?

: If I will get good owner, then definitely.

: How is the good owner? Are we categorized?

: Who are in the family? Like interviewer taking interview of a candidate, Ruphali also asked Rajen.

4.2.3.2 Phaglee

Generally, Bodo villages are in remote areas, where almost one market is available nearby Bodo village. It is a place of buying and selling. The Bodo people go to market as per their needs to buy. This scene is also picturized in the various stories, i.e. *Phaglee*, *Barmwdai*, *Rwikhagiri*, and *Master Race*.

Though it is hard sunshine, Hiranya Narzary whom people known as Haren Master has gone to market by his bicycle. Suddenly hearing the sound of an explosion in the ear, Haren Master started pedalling the pedal of his old bicycle with more energy. But instead of the bicycle moving, the rear tyre started rotating even more. Suddenly he realized that nothing had happened, rather the rear tyre of his bicycle burst. He quickly got down and started checking. There was a fifteen kg zinger in his bicycle carrier. He bought it for seed. He had come to this market to buy this zinger though this market was 11 km distance from his village.

Again in the story *Barmwdai*, the same situation is described. Kalikingkar was pushing his bicycle above the approach of over bridge. One bag is in the carrier and two bags are hanging in the handle. It was a weekly market, from where he bought all household goods for a week.

³⁷Zaraphagla, *Rajkhanthini Rajmistri*, *Dantharu*, Kokrajhar: Danali Publications, 2004, p-8

Earlier in the Bodo villages, bicycle is the main transportation. By bicycle, they have to go miles and miles journey. Because there was no option for other transportation. The tradition of the people of the villages to go to the market and the use of bicycles in the village area is reflected in these stories.

4.2.3.3 *Dantharu*

Generally, a Bodo society is run in a disciplined manner. Their livelihood is very simple. They always maintained discipline. Male and female physical relation without marriage is considered a very big sin. If someone does this, then justice is done to them by sitting a panchayat in the village itself. It is handled by the village head. If a villager does not go to the meeting, they put a fine on them. And those who are victims are given compensation according to justice. Still, it is seen in the Bodo society. In Dantharu's story too this scene is picturised. Singkhaori alerted her husband Damphla about the meeting time and warned him that if he is not going then he will be fined. Therefore Damphla must go to the meeting of justice.

4.2.3.4 *Barmwdai*

The true inspiration of the fiction is society and its criticism. A social fiction created out of the inspiration of the hopes and aspirations for equal rights and freedom of thought. Thus in a social fiction, criticism of justice and injustice is applied. But this criticism is always indirect as a writer doesn't point out one's good or bad directly. The characters are informed by virtue of their characteristics, behaviour and activities. Such as, in every short story, Zaraphagla mentions a character which is appears as a villain or a negative role that is bringing a dark shadow in society and such people are always ready to input their money and power. But their evil character is displayed through their thoughts and activities and finally, they destroy themselves as their sin is increased.

Through the story of Barmwdai, a big social issue of the Bodos is depicted. Usually, the Bodo ThunlaiAafad was first formed with the name of Boro Sahitya Sabha. It is often debated as to why the name of this literary meeting, which was formed because of all the reasons, was also given as Assamese, not in Bodo language.

: बेखौ आंबो बुजिबाय नोंथां। नाथाय जिड' नबेम्बरा बड थुनलाइनि नडाबड साहित्य ,
सभानिसो जोनोम सान।

: राजाया बेखौबो खिन्थाखादों आंनो। गोदो गरमेन्टनि खातायाव मुं थिसननाय समाव
नेताफ्रानो बड थुनलाइ आफादनि बदलै बड साहित्य सभा लिरनानै होफ्रानायनि
थाखायनो दा बेखौ हारसा गरमेन्टआ सोलायनोनो होआनो। गावनि हादर मोनब्लासो बे
हारसानि बड साहित्य सभाखौ बड रावआव सोलायनानै लानो हागोन होननानै बुंदों।³⁸

English Rendering:

: *I understand that too. But sixteen November is the birthday of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha, not of the BoroThunlai.*

: *Raja has already told me this. Since the leaders wrote the Bodo Sahitya Sabha instead of the BoroThunlaiAfad when they were enrolled in the old Government account, it is no longer allowed to be replaced by other officers of other community. It is said that only if they got their separate state, it could convert the Assamese word Bodo Sahitya Sabha into the Bodo language*

4.2.3.5 Iswrni Thandwi

The property in the family is divided among the brothers. Even if one brother dies, his children get their father's property. Zaraphagla has also tried to show this custom of the Bodo society through the conversation between Santhola, Merbang and Thengwna in the story ***Iswrni Thandwi***. Thengwna told to Santhola that he had shared their property with his nephew after the

³⁸Zaraphagla, Barmwdai, Dantharu, Kokrajhar: Danali Publications, 2004, p-42

death of his elder brother. They shared it equally because his nephew has rights to his father's property as next of kin.

Like in the story *Dantharu*, in the story of *Iswrni Thandwi*, here also seen that a judgement meeting is called on for the male and female physical relation issue. Thengwna informed Santhola and Merbang that he as a judgeman recently punished a man, who raped a girl. The man, whom he punished, must pay compensation to the girls and villagers. He believed that the punished man could not be paid the compensation without selling his land and property, because the villagers demanded a very high amount of money as compensation.

4.2.3.6 Master Race

Human beings are social beings. Without society, the family will be isolated. Human beings live in within the society. It is a small unit of the society. As a social being, people should have close relations with each other. Individually the people cannot survive. Therefore, it is need to close their own relatives as well as close relation to other members of the society. This kind of social message is depicted in this story through the character of Binay when he asks his cousin to keep relations with them.

Generally, Bodos are agrarian society. Therefore as a hard worker, they take sleep early and rise early in the morning. Because they have to work the whole day. Zaraphagla tried to show the nature of the Bodos in this story through the conversation between Binay and Nilambar.

4.2.3.7 Dainee

Every parent wants to get their daughters married to an acquaintance. And more than that, the people of every society have the same dream... the son-in-law should be wealthy, he should be self-established. Some think that everything else happens only by having money. Such kind of picture is also depicted in this story.

In any case, anything wrong in every society brings a bad name to the girls. Once the girl is defamed, later people find an opportunity to give more infamy to her. That is why girls always

need to control themselves; have to think a hundred times before doing anything that's why girls have to keep a lot of things hidden. In this story too, an attempt has been made to show this side of society.

There is a custom between the Bodo people. Every evening, a lamp is lit in the name of God. The Bodo people have an altar built in one corner of every house, where a Sijou tree is planted; it is called 'Bathou'. Along with Sijau, a Tulsi tree, a tree called Jatrasa is also planted and by lighting a lamp under it, prayers are prayed to God for the happiness and peace of the family. The main woman of the family does the work of lighting this lamp. Sometimes if she is not able to do it, then her daughters do this work. That's why mothers teach this work to their children from childhood. This picture of Bodos is reflected in this story.

Family members or any relative mourn the death. These days, unless Shradh is celebrated in the name of the deceased, no meat-fish meal is prepared at home. This custom is celebrated in every Bodo family. Its glimpse is seen in this story.

4.3 Reflection of Economy in the stories

Bodo society is an agrarian society mainly. Their livelihood depends on agriculture. But the situation is slowly changing from agriculture to business. The world of today is growing very fast. Therefore the Bodos are also go fast adjusting them by the situation still a few Bodo people are taking business.

4.3.1 Gunda

The development of a society depends on its economic progress. To bring economic progress, everyone should work equally in the house. Be it a man or a woman; everyone can work equally, can divide the work and can live happily. Therefore, Zaraphagla has also given a sample of this story not only on men running the house but has given a sample of women who have taken all the responsibility of the house by doing jobs. *Rwikhagiri*, *Gunda*, *Zwmwngara* and *Habilani Zengna*, *Zengnani Habila* are the four stories of *Gunda*. In these four stories, the writer tries to show that people have to fight for economic development. Nobody can live happily without money. To earn money everybody has to work hard.

In the story *Rwikhagiri*, it is to be mentioned people are running after money. This is the era of competition. To maintain their livelihood without money today's world cannot survive. The writer tried to show that nowadays people have adopted a lot of shortcut paths to keep pace with the times. Sometimes this shortcut path becomes life's biggest enemy. If people go through the wrong path, one day they will have to face problems for it.

In the story *Gunda*, an attempt has been made to show the helpless character of the Bodo people. Bodo people are economically very poor. Even if they want to do business, they have to borrow from others due to lack of capital. At the time of borrowing, they mortgage the property they have. If someone needs money, people borrow from other people. Interest has to be paid for this and that too more than the bank's interest. Yet people take loans privately in this way, keeping their house or land in bondage. Pranita's father also had to help a friend namely Nayan sing Brahma. Nayansing Brahma wanted to run a motor garage in Guwahati. Therefore, Subodh, father of Pranita and Rakesh had mortgaged his house and borrowed money from Nandeswar Dekha to help Nayan without letting know to his family. When Subodh was alive then Nayan paid the interest to Nandeswar. But after the demise of Subodh, Nayan didn't pay it. Therefore Nandeswar Dekha came to Pranita's house and informed them that all the papers of property belonging to Pranita's family were in the hands of Nandeswar. If they don't pay the other remaining loan, then he will take their home by force.

It is the economy that sustains people, and spoils people. The Dowry system is not avail in the Bodo society. Since ancient times, the Bodo women have had equal rights in their families. A son-in-law is prioritized in the Bodo society as much as a son. The son-in-law is to be loved and cared for in the family as much as the son. So whenever the son-in-law is in any problem, the in-laws help. But some people do not use money properly and bring complexity to every work. They spend money but do not know how to spend money which works. If people do not do every work on time and do not use money properly, then problems arise in life. The conversation was done between Swmkhe and Kharphathi in the story *Zwmwngara-*

: माबाहाइ... बि बिजामादैफ्राबो कनट्राक्ट मावोनालाय ,दा बहाबा मोनसे गिदिर स्किम मोनदोंनो। सिगांनि बिलखौबो मोनजोबाखै होनदों। बेनिखायनो थिंखिलखौ थोनहरदों लाखसेसो रां हावलात नागिरनो।..

खार्फाथिखौ बुंजोबनो होआलासिनो गेजेराव बुंगोबाय सोमखेआ

: हरदो। बिजामादैनो हराब्ला सोरनोथो हरबावनो? फिसाजोखौनो हरखाबाय जेब्ला रां-खावरि हरनायालाय माथोबाव। दानिया बेफोरबादि स्कीमनि खामानियाव आजां-गाजां मुनाफा जाथारोनो। कन्ट्रैकट मावनानै बिजामादैया माहाजोन जायोब्ला बिखुब्जो हिसाबै नोंहानोथ इज्जत बारायगोन।

: बबेनिफ्राय हरबावनोबाल...। साखि मावोसो हय ,हनै माथो फैसा गरसेखौनो थिनानै दोननो रोंफेराखै जोंना माब्लाबाबो। बुथुम-बुथाम रोजाबाजि हरबाय। बेजों थोआ , रोजाबाजि नांथारबावगौ। हरनायालाय बिदिनो सिगांबो हरखांबाय खन्नै ना खनथाम। बिल मोनब्ला होफैफिनगोन होनो ,नाथाय बहाथो बोरो। बिलफोरखौनो बरननानै लानो रोंगौ ना रोडाथाइ। जेरैबो जाथारैनि नोंनावसो मोनथ'गोन साननानै थिनहरनायानो आंखौ थिंखिल बिफाया।³⁹

English Rendering:

What actually is... Our son-in-law is a contractor, so now he has got a big scheme. It also said that the previous bill was not cleared. So he has sent his wife Thinkli to ask for 1 lakh rupees in credit.
Swmkhe interrupted.

³⁹Zaraphagla.Zwmwngara, Gunda, Kokrajhar: OmehPublications,2004, p-91

: Give it, give it then. If you don't give it to your own son-in-law, to whom will you give it to? You gave your daughter, then what is this money? Nowadays it comes to hear a lot of benefit in all these schemes. If your son-in-law becomes rich by contracting, then your position will also increase.

: Where will it come from? My husband does a job, but never learned to save money. Anyway, he gave fifty thousand. It won't happen; he says he needs another fifty thousand. We have already given him such two or three times. He says that he will return after getting bill. But where is it? We don't know whether he can pursue bill or not. There is no way, so Thngkhli's father sent me to you to ask you about money.

In the story ***Habilani Zengna, Zengnani Habila***, it is seen how males earn their money to make their wives happy. Some think that if they earn more money and bring it for their wife then their wife will be very happy. Rabin thinks that he needs promotion to Barababu i.e. Superintendent. Then he will get more money. It will be enough to educate his two daughters. On the other hand wife Lalita also gets more happiness with more money. This kind of situation is picturised in this story.

4.3.2 Banalata

The short stories of ***Banalata*** are ***Guthal, Banalata, Songsar and Ziuni Khobam***. In this story also economic condition of the Bodos are depicted by Zaraphagla.

As the story of ***Guthal*** is filled with love, respect and responsibility, it is remarkable that the hero of the story, Indranil is a very successful businessman. He has a Travel Bus Agency and a Shopping mall. From that view of the point the family of Indranil is well established and as they are rich people they can help other poor people without any hesitation which Indranil did. Following her uncle, the elder daughter of Irabati also did a good job helping one very poor girl, keeping her in a hostel for higher education, who was tortured by her own aunty.

In the story, ***Banalata***, the main character Banalata is an educated and self-dependent lady, whereas Abhijit is also a successful businessman. They have no financial problems. However,

Boloram faced financial problems due to his poorness. Boloram does a teacher's job. But due to not getting salary on time, he has difficulty in running the house. He was unable to treat his ailing wife. His brother Manoj was also dropping out of his studies. Because Boloram was not able to pay admission fees for him. Manoj was good at reading. However, the financial problem of their family is forced him to stop his higher education. At that time Abhijit helped Boloram and took the responsibility of teaching Manoj.

Everybody needs money to live a better life. Without hard work, nobody can earn more. Saving the money received from hard work and using money in the right way at the right time takes life forward with happiness. In the story ***Songsar***, Laoga had stored all his hard-earned money. Sometimes he earned a lot of money by driving tractors in people's fields, sometimes by selling vegetables. So when Laogi thought of buying a scooter or bike along with buying a tractor at home for farming, he quickly told about the money he had. This story does not only reveal the hard-earned money, but it also shows that a tractor is given by the government as a subsidy to help in farming. If people want to work with a true heart and want to bring progress to their country with their family, then the government also provides financial establishment for that too.

In the story ***Ziuni Khobam*** the economic condition is not reflecting so much. It is a story of a joint family, where the main character is well educated and high-rank govt. job holder and the other family members are also well educated. Earlier in Bodo society, there was a joint family system, nowadays it is very rare.

4.3.3 *Dantharu*

According to Salman Rushdie, *'What made me become a writer was the simple desire to tell stories...governed by the principle that stories didn't have to be time...Horses were expected to fly and so didicarpets..I found that I was writing within a literature that for a long time had shapped an opposite view...a inovel had to bemimetic, to imitate the world, the rules of naturalism and realism.'*⁴⁰

⁴⁰Salman Rushdie, In Michael Reder(ed), *Conversation with Salman Rushdie*, University Press of Mississippi, 2000

There are total seven short stories in the *Dantharu*. These are *Rajkhanthini Rajmistri* (*Mason of the Politics*), *Phaglee* (*The Mad Lady*), *Iswrni Thandwi* (*The Prophet*), *Dantharu* (*The Slayer*), *Barmwdai* (*The Tornado*), *Master Race* and *Dainee* (*The Witch*).

Money is very important in every way of life. Those who have gone through financial problems since childhood know the importance of money. Knowing how to run life, and how to earn money is also an effort to bring financial stability. Most of the Bodo people are not financially strong, due to which also affected the education of their children. By plain work does not make people rich quickly. That's why people choose the illegal way to become rich quickly. There are many children whose higher education is hindered due to being financially weak. Some children make excuses for their financial problems. In this story too, the hero is a personality who went through financial problems in childhood and later takes the wrong path and becomes the Godfather of the area. The short story *Rajkhanthini Rajmistri* is the examples of such conditions where the main character Rajen goes through a situation like this.

गुदि फरायसालिनि गोरिब फोरोंगिरि देबेन माष्टरनि गिबि फिसा हौवा राजेनआ। नाथोद-
नुथोद थाखो जिथिसिम मोनहैनानै मेट्रिकनि देवनायाव थे नांथाहैदोंमोन राजेनआ।
नाथाय बरातआ राजेननिया मोजां। बै समनिफ्रायनो गेवनो हमदों बिनि मोखाडाव
बरातनि गुवार दरजाया। राइजोनि दुंदुं-हावहाव हालोदआव सावरि जानानै बयबो
उत्रिसारनायबादिनो राजेनआबो फोर बारबोनो हदों मेट्रिकनि देवनाखौ। बेनि उनाव
फैबाय कलेजनि फोथाराव। बिफा देबेन माष्टरआ लेर लेर बानदोंमोन राजेननि कलेज
फरायनायनि खरसानि बिबानखौ। जेब्लाबो थोआ-लोमा फासयहां-आन्दायहां। थिक बे
समावनो थाखि-थुखि बोरैबा लोगो मोनसनदों राजेनआ दंफां बादारी अगेन लाहारीखौ।
फरेशार ,रेन्जार ,डि.एफ.अ ,.कन्जारभेटरनि गुमुर-गरन्थनि सं दाननो बियो अब्लानो
सोलोंदों। गोथां रां-खावरिनि स्वादखौ बियो मोनफेरदों आरो सालाइयाव हाबिलानि खदैया

र र बोहैजेनदों। लेखा फरानि फालाखों आथाताव थुखोहरनानै रां-खावरि आवथायनायनि
दावहाथिलियाव बारसोमदों बियो गोल्ते बैसोयावनो।⁴¹

English Rendering:

Rajen was the first child of Deben Master, a poor primary school teacher. After reaching the tenth standard, Rajen was stuck in taking the matriculation examination. But Rajen had good luck. From that time onwards, the big door of his destiny had started opening. During the community movement, Rajen also got the opportunity to take the group examination by giving everyone the opportunity to take the same open examination and he jumped into this opportunity. After that he came to the college grounds. His father was painstakingly paying for his education. Hard to go through all the time. At the same time, Rajen suddenly met OgenLahari, a timber trader. He learned how to report to Forester, Ranger, DFO, and Conservator. He got a taste of black money and the saliva of greed started coming out in the tongue. Leaving the education a side, he jumped into the war to earn money at a young age.

The story **Phaglee** is about the newly formed place is neither a village nor a town. The story is lead by Haren Master, who was carrying a bag of zinger to his home on his old bicycle and gets the tyre blast. He decided to repair the cycle replacing the tube and handed over his old cycle to the cycle maker and entered into a tea stall to pass his time, but faced some incidents. There he met a mad lady, whose son Dwimalu was slaughtered by goons for having an affair with another caste girl. The mad lady tears off the posters of those goons who killed her son and for this she is also bitten brutally by a group of boys and even the group leader Ramwnda thinks of finishing her up. Ramwnda says all those words in front of Haren Master. Ramwnda is a jobless person, but seeing him constructing a new building the way he dresses, his look all these could not be

⁴¹Zaraphagla. *Rajkhanthini Rajmistri, Dantharu, Kokrajhar*: Danali Publications, 2004, p-2

digested by Haren master, he also thinks from where Ramwnda gets that much money? He also realizes that Ramwnda is not a good person, who chooses the wrong path.

In the story of *Dantharu* the financial issues are the main reason. Whatever incident has happened in the *Dantharu* story, it has happened only about money. Due to being a poor girl, Laodangi lives as a servant in others' houses. But in the process of earning more money, she traps the owner in her trap. She accuses her owner of forcibly raping her. She gets money in her compensation. Bodo people may own real estate but they do not have cash in their hands. Lantha is rich but he did not have 10 thousand cash in his hand. He needs two days to deposit that money. Because he gets that money only by selling some of the goods from his home. Dinesh was very rude and indecent because he had a lot of money. He earned all that money illegally.

People think that everything happens with money. With the abundant money, they can make the world their slave. By taking this thinking forward, people like Dinesh became the owner of a lot of money despite not being educated and people like Damphla remained behind despite being knowledgeable. This is the custom of this new age and through this story, the new-age economic situation has been shown like this.

In the story, *Barmwdai* very poor family condition is seen through the dialogue given by the street man. He explained about his home that he has only one house where he lives with his wife and three children. Even he has no money to buy bed sheets, blankets, pillows etc. Raja, the leader, who is delivering lectures in the meeting has gifted him. Though police are searching for Raja to arrest, they can never imagine that a leader like Raja could live in such a poor man's home. This type of poor people is still available in the Bodo society.

In the Bodo society, business is not a key player because the Bodo people mostly participate in the agriculture sector and other primary sectors. Still, the Bodo people lack behind the market, they have no any proper idea about the business. They start business with full expenditure but cannot manage it. This happens due to lack of knowledge of business.

The unsuccessful business is shown in the story *Iswrni Thandwi*. The main character Santhola started his business with a big budget, but cannot run smoothly. His helplessness condition reflected in his explanation that he started his business by printing three or four books at a time. He had published two books of stories and one novel book. The books were written by new authors. His friend Thengwna brought out two books by two authors. One is chosen by Santhola from them who always requested Santhola to publish their book. All three books are now stuffed into every corner of his house and shop. Without knowing anything about the business, it is now difficult to run his family by spending all the money of his own savings.

It has been always noticed that Bodo people don't want to buy more books and they don't want to read more books. If they buy or read sometimes, they only buy books written by established writers. As a publisher, Santhola published books written by new authors; therefore he failed in his business. Again he has less knowledge about the business. Therefore he spends all of his capital in once time.

Apart from knowing about the business of the Bodo people through this story, the Bodo people are not interested in reading books and do not want to read any book after buying them.

In the story *Master Race*, it is seen that those whose family is already good, they also make their way of life easier. And those who are lazy, who have no dream of growing up, they always remain poor. This is also depicted in this story when the author introduces three people. One is a government servant, for whom even his parents have already kept ancestral property. They know how to handle the family; they learn how to live life. One is those who live a lazy life, who have no dreams of growing up, who have no brains about what to do to make their family better. He is a teacher himself, but he has not learned anything from life. His parents were also poor, so they also wanted to live poor. Despite being educated himself, he gives birth to five sons in the dream of a daughter and he has a lot of difficulty in raising them. And a boy, who only knows how to work, earns and knows how to make life colourful at a young age. This picture is reflected in this story.

The importance of money is clear; everybody can feel the importance of money. When the factor in the costs of necessities to sustain life. It can't buy happiness, but financial wellbeing is important if you want to provide for your family's basic needs. Earning money in life, using money well and the need for money to live a happy life are all found in this story.

In the story *Dainee*, it is seen that Ramwnda struggled in his life very much. He was not only poor but he was an orphan. His sister died at a very small age. At that time Ramwnda was also very small and he was unable to buy medicine for his little sister. After the death of his sister, he began to work under contractors and later he also became an established contractor. On the other side, Swmshri, the maid of Rwimali is also from a very poor family. She stayed in her village with her elder aunt due to financial crisis, but some people disturbed her. For that reason, she came with Rwimali and stayed in her home as a maid. Swmshri was very interested in studying but due to financial crisis, she missed her studies. There are many such children in Bodo society who miss their studies due to financial crisis and these children have to live as servants in other's houses.

4.4 Conclusions:

According to David MacLean, 'There can be no such thing as a complete personal experience, even the most intimate experiences that people gain through social reality, and all human beings are part of this reality.'⁴² The vision of fiction writers has expanded to all aspects of life and the lowest sections of society. Going inside the closed doors of beauty and beauty-creation, they want new beauty. The free use of symbols and extinct social memories of everyday life and the release of romanticism from the guilt of exaggeration seems to open a new door to the beauty of Zaraphagla's stories. He has beautifully portrayed many of the issues of the society and seems to be trying to point out the need for greater abundance, equality and justice in life. He gives an indication through his stories of how to move forward from the web of inequality and injustice that has not been able to move forward. Like customs and traditions, similar cultures, a sense of kindness and belongingness and a common language mark the main features of the society. As the family is an essential element of society, it is the basis of every community. Without it, a

⁴² <https://www.drdauidmcmillan.com/sense-of-community/sense-of-community-a-definition-and-theory>

community cannot exist. It is the only social institution other than religion, which is formally developed in all societies. A family is a group of people related either by consanguinity or by recognized birth, affinity by marriage or other relationship, or co-residence, i.e., family servants, etc. Within the family, all members are related, either in fact, putatively or potentially, by blood or marriage. The religious aspect is not found directly in his short stories although Zaraphagla's plot construction, characterization, atmosphere creation, referring to custom, marriage-system etc bring religious philosophy to the readers. Those who can earn money wrongly, the same people are achieving high positions in the society, the writer has also tried to show this economic condition through his story.

George P. Murdock said 'A family is a social group characterized by common residence, economiccooperation, and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults.'⁴³

⁴³Murdock, George P. *Social Structure*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965, p-1