

## CHAPTER-II

### 2.0 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BODO NOVELS

#### 2.1 Introduction:

Literature is an art. It is the mirror of a society. There are many branches of literature that includes poem, prose, short story, novel, drama and so on. Poem is the first and foremost created form among all the branches of literature in the world. Novels constitute the most important branch of literature. It is through novels that writers find a medium to describe the whole story of life. It is a prose narrative that describes fictional characters and events in the form of a sequential story.

According to Indira Boro,

*"When a credible life history, a well-known life of a man and woman, a particular society's problems and the soul of its people, the hopes and aspirations of the society acquire the form of incidents and characters in a well-defined sequence of events then it becomes a novel."*<sup>1</sup>

Kalyannath Dutta mentions about the novel in his book 'Some Aspects of the Study of Literature' as

*"The term 'Novel' has come from the Italian word 'Novella'. But it is, in its real sense, something different from the Italian novella. The Italian novella is a sort of romance- a story of love, adventure, or both. It comprises, no doubt, different episodes and events, and ends either in a happy union or in tragic suffering. But the novel, as it is known to day, is something different. It is, no doubt, a story, but this is a story, wrought round the passions of man. It is not merely a series of incidents and situation, but also a revelation of character or characters. It is a story of life and a study of the characters, participating in the story. The combination of the story and the character-study forms the plinth of novel-writing, and the appropriate synthesis of the two marks the greatness of a novel."*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Boro Indira : Comparative study about the Boro and Assamese novel. A thesis submitted to the University of Gauhati for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts, p-11

<sup>2</sup>Dutta, Kalyannath: Some Aspects of the Study of Literature, p- 3 (part five)

M.H. Abrams mention in his book A Glossary of Literary Terms

*"The term novel is applied to a great variety of writings that have in common only the attribute of being extended works of fiction written in prose. As an extended narrative, the novel is distinguished from the short and from the work of middle length called the novelette; its magnitude permits a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plot (or plots), ampler development of milieu and more sustained exploration of character and motives than do the shorter, more concentrated modes. As a narrative written in prose, the novel is distinguished from the long narratives in verse of Geoffrey Chaucer, Edmund Spenser, and John Milton which, beginning with the eighteenth century, the novel has increasingly supplanted."*<sup>3</sup>

The commencement of writing novel among Bodo literature started at much later stage. It was only after the formation of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha that Bodo novel was published. The first Bodo novel was published in 1962. 'Jujaini or' written by Chittaranjan Muchahary is the first Bodo novel. Bodo novels are mostly social novels.

*"As per English Literature novel are classified into —(1) Social novel, (2) Psychological novel, (3) Regional novel, (4) Historical novel, (5) Auto Biographical novel, (6) Political novel, (7) Detective novel, (8) Stream of consciousness novel, (9) novel of magic realism and (10) The new novel."*<sup>4</sup>

Bodo novelists tries to focus on the social, cultural and political picture in their novel. Bodo novel can be divided into three types. These are social novel, historical novel and detective novels.

## **2.2 Social Novel:**

Social novel is one among the most important types of the novel. They present the social pictures of the society. The political, social and economic conditions are specifically shown in these social novels.

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<sup>3</sup>Abrams M.H: A Glossary of Literary Terms, p-252

<sup>4</sup>NarzaryChinon(2010):A study of the Bodo novels since 1962 to 2001. A thesis submitted to the university of Gauhati for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts, p-2

According to M.H.Abrams

*“The social novel emphasizes the influence of the social and economic condition of an era on shaping characters and determining events; if it also embodies an implicit or explicit thesis recommending political and social reform, it is often called a sociological novel.”*<sup>5</sup>

In the Bodo literature, the novel came up after the formation of the Bodo Sahitya Sabha. In the year 1962, Chittaranjan Mochahary created the first novel 'Jujaini Or'. Through the novel, he has depicted the beautiful nature of the Bodo village. The Bodo community's lifestyle has been seen. The story of the novel is very heart-wrenching. The main protagonist's of the novel is Ajay and Alaisri. They love each other but cannot marry. Ajay was forced to marry Aloka, by his parents. So, he marries Aloka and later became a drunkard. On the other side Alaisri became mad. In this way story end on a tragic note. His second novel is 'Bikhaya Gaoyw Khugaya Geoya' published in the year 1972. This is also a social novel. Through the characters of Ajit, Santi and Kolpona's, the theme of love triangle has been vividly portrayed. Ajit is in love with Kolpona. Kolpona although loves him but her love for him was very shallow. One day while Ajit was doing science practical, accidentally a chemical fell onto the face of Ajay and ultimately he lost his eyesight that made him blind. Kolpona came to know about the condition of Ajit and she dumped him for another boy. On the other hand, Santi could not bear Ajit's blind condition and therefore, she donated both her eyes to Ajit and became blind forever instead. But it is very poignant that her love for Ajit is unrequited while Ajit always loved and cherished Kolpona. The storyline ends tragically. Mochahary's novels are mostly social novels. He is one of the highest contributors to Bodo novels amongst the Bodo novelist's. His novels are- Jujaini Or (1962), Bikhaya gaow khugaya geoa published on 1972, Girls hostel Vol-I (1981), Vol-II (1983), Vol-III (1986) , Gwrwnthini unao (1981), Ang Nilimamwn (1982), Fulmuthi (1983), Ang nenanwi thagwn (1985), Sarmistha (1985), Nwngni megonanw angni megon (1985), Anthainimwdwi (1987), Kol girl (1988), Sujata (1988), Bilw gw (1988) Mwdwi (1988), Undaha (1988), Jeoni lamayao (1988), Daokhani Baha (1992), Khithir

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<sup>5</sup> Abrams, M.H: A Glossary of Literary Terms p-256

(1993), Lorhainai bibar(1993), Gwmanai dairy(1994), Golab bibarni su(1994). Bari khonani bibar(1994), Nwng angni ang nwngni(1996), Jethw(1999), Bibarjwng dasunai, Habani asthma, Daha etc.

Another famous novelist in Bodo literature is Monoranjan Lahary. His first novel is Kharlung written in 1976. This novel is a social novel and open-ended. This novel maintains the modern character of the novel. The novel has a stream of consciousness. While in his second novel Hainamuli (1985) Lahary tries to focus on some superstitious beliefs in Bodo society. His other novels are Rebeka (1999), Alaishree (2003) Daini? (2005), Jom (2006), and Phami(2008). He was awarded Sahitya Akademi for his novel Daini? in 2009.

Dharanidhar Wary another novelist of repute who deserves a special mention. He has written only one novel but his contribution as a novelist is well acclaimed. His novel 'Mwihur' is a regional novel and published in 1980. The novel is set in the outskirts of the villages and forests of Manas National Park. Manas has been kept as the central point of focus in the novel at the same time the adjoining villages are been brought into the site. For that reason, it has also been considered as a regional novel. According to M.H. Abrams

*“The regional novel emphasizes the setting, speech, and social structure and customs of a particular locality, not merely as local color, but as important condition affecting the temperament of the characters and their ways of thinking, feeling and interacting.”*<sup>6</sup>

Through the novel, the Bodo people's social and economic prospect has been highlighted. The Bodo people's weaving, rearing of the silkworm, hunting, collecting vegetables, etc has been portrayed. The story is about a hunter and Dodere's love. Nevertheless, the novelist has also provided it with some social elements to blend it as a social novel. Golo is a poor young man who belongs to a hunter's family. One fine day when he went out for hunting he came across Dodere for the first time. Dodere had gone for fishing in Manas along with her friends but unfortunately, she was being chased by some people but rescued by Golo. From that time onwards both of them fell in love. Unluckily there was a hindrance to their love

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<sup>6</sup> Abrams, M.H, A Glossary of Literary Terms p-257

story as a boy name Mwblao also loved Dodere. He tried his best to break their love forever. As Dodere was not happy with Golo's task of hunting she asked him not to indulge in hunting to which Golo happily agreed. One day a tiger came and ate up all the livestock of the village, and no one could kill the tiger. The people from the forest department entrusted the task of killing the tiger to Golo as he was an efficient hunter. Golo was able to accomplish the given task and soon after he was given a job in the forest department. Mwblao gunda<sup>7</sup> became jealous of Golo's job and out of jealousy and hatred one day he kills Golo. Dodere after getting the news of Golo's death becomes senseless and unconscious. In this way, the story ends.

Kanteswar Brahma has published three novels they are- phaguni (1986), wrwi jebwla (1984), Nijira (1986). All his novels are social novels. The picture of the Bodo society has been beautifully depicted.

Nandeswar Dwimari's, Monjubala Devi novel which was published in the year 1980 is also a social novel. Through this novel, the love story of a Bodo boy named Abhi and a girl from Brahmin family Monju's has been depicted. Through the novel, it has been shown how the Bodo community people have been looked down and dominated by the high class of people of other tribes. The Bodo people were looked down, neglected and were not considered equal to them. Abhi is a Bodo boy and Monju is a Brahmin girl. They met in a college while pursuing their degrees and both of them fell in love. One day, when Abhi visited Monju's family they did not give chance to dine together with them. As they came to know that Abhi was a Bodo boy and even he had to wash his plates but Manju washed the plates for Abhi. The people from high caste considered the Bodo's as people from low caste and they thought that if they dine and mingle together than, it was against the societal order and they will become impure. Abhi and Manju had a court registered marriage and after marriage, Abhi took Manju to his house. On the day Manju arrived at Abhi's house she saw her father's photo and she came to know from the maid-servant Nale that her father the father of Abhi were both the same person. He had cheated on Abhi's mother and run away. After knowing the fact Manju writes a letter to Abhi and she kills herself.

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<sup>7</sup> Villain or bad boy

Nabin Mallo Boro also contributed two novels and enhanced the Bodo literature. His first novel is *Debojit Molina arw .....*(1983). His second novel is 'Bwrai Pagladiyani Gwdam Dara' published in the year 2007 and is a regional novel. The novel also illustrates the role of social elements, the economic and political scenario.

The novel 'Gwtar Thulungsi' novel by Mogesh Narza Boro published in the year 1997 is also one of the social novels. In his novel, the social-cultural lives of the Bodo people are purely transparent. Through this novel, the novelist has emphasized the societal norms, religious practices and the village lifestyle and their dealings with the everyday hurdles are visible. This novel begins with Bathouism religion and its importance has been highlighted till the end of the novel. In the middle of the novel, the imaginative features are depicted. Here the negative character of the Bhutanese king Dhumpa has been projected through an imaginative process.

The social facts and true image of the Bathouism are given due importance here. At one point in time, there were lots of controversies regarding the religion amongst the Bodos. This led many Bodos to embrace Eksaron Religion while Sonaram's son Gwhtar, the main protagonist of the story stood against them due to which Sonaram's family was boycotted. This act of boycott among the Bodo people is not an imagination. This novel projects the actual facts, conflicts and confusion in the Bathou Religion which had happened in real life among the Bodos. Visiting the Bodo villages and enticing the people and propagating their own religion cannot be denied. This novel 'Gwthar Thulugsi' is just a proven book of such incidents amalgamated with the social facts and stories fulfilling the characteristics of true social novel. Among the Bodo society, there were some societal norms and traditions for the crimes committed by people to punish them or to purify the ill-doings. These kinds of norms and practices were closely related with the Bathou Religion such as-Agorbad, Phongslodbad, Daokhibad, Khoulobobad and Khaoalibad. In the purification process, some things and animals were necessary that includes pigs, chicken, pigeon, fish, etc. as highlighted in the novel. A girl being forced to be bride is also being showcased. The performing of Kherai Puja by

seeking blessing from the Bwrai Bathou, the Kherai woman dancer disclosing about all the good and bad things of the village is also prominent in the novel. Some of these social factors have uplifted the novel to a higher position. It can be noted that Bodo literature does not deal with only one theme.

Tiren Boro also another famous novelist in Bodo literature. His first novel Bigrai arw Dwisrai is published in 1992. This novel is a social novel and he tries to focus on the Bodoland demand organised by All Bodo Student Union and how Bodo people faced the problem on Bodoland demand. His other novels are Fungbili, Gwswjwng Gwsw, Deobari, Bokhali , Beo Gonge Boro Gami Dongmwn, etc.

Katindra Swargiary has also contributed to Bodo literature. His first novel was Jarouli published in 1999 while the second novel was “Sanmwkhangari lamajwng “published in 2002. He was awarded Sahitya Akademi for this novel in 2006. This novel shows the socio-economic and political picture of the Bodo society. The third novel Khwmsinifrai Swrangthing” was published in 2002. In this novel, he presents a realistic picture of the Bodo society. He shows the communal clash between the Bodo and Muslims. Another novel is Khwmsi published in 2004.

Aron Raja is also another famous Bodo novelist. He has contributed a few novels in Bodo literature. His first novel is “Horwi Maruao” published in 1990. “Gwswm Fwisali”(1994), “Andw Mulug” (1997), Jwbthesaliao Juli (2007), Kalyani Nwng Angni (1992) are some of the other important novels. Samjit Kumar Brahma’s novel ‘Malati’(1983) and ‘Hinjao Gwdan’(1985) are social novel.

Jio Gagolangnai San' written by Dhireswar Boro Narzary, published in 1995, is a social novel based on the Bodo community in the most rural areas. Thogaisuli Hadwd (1997) Ramani Bilash Mochary's first novel is a social novel, describing the various types of characters, incidents and the Bodo society culture living in the village areas. “Gwrbwni Radai" (1996) is the first novel written by Bodo women novelist Mina Kherkatary. This novel is also the first Bodo Autobiographical novel. The autobiographical novel is another type of novel writing. The novelist here becomes one of the characters of the novel and described his story.

According to Kalyannath Dutta in the book ‘Some Aspects of the study of literature’

*"The autobiographical is quite interesting and provoking. In this method, the novelist writes in the first person. He becomes one of the characters of the novel (generally the chief character) and identifies himself with the course or development of action in the life of the different character in the novel. The autobiographical novel is, as characterised by Hudson, an 'imaginary autobiography' although it is occasionally related to the reality of the author's life. As a matter of fact, the imaginary aspects of this novel is generally merged with the personal element of the author's life and the work becomes partly a novel and partly an autobiography."*<sup>8</sup>

### **2.3 Historical Novel:**

The historical novel is also a very important form of novels. According to Kalyannath Dutta in his book 'Some Aspect of the Study of Literature',

*"The historical novel is definitely no history. It is primarily a work of art, in which historical materials or matters are used sometimes as its staple and sometimes as its background. In fact, facts, incidents or situations and characters are treated here against some historical background, with artistic comprehensions and imagination. The historical novel, thus, tells a story artistically, in which historical personages feature and in which the history of a particular age, land, or people of the past provides a background. It is, indeed, a fusion of fact and fiction, of the romance of the past and the requirement of art."*<sup>9</sup>

In Bodo literature, we can find a few historical novels. The first Bodo historical novel is Birgwshrini Thungri written by Bidya Sagar Narzary. In this novel, the story is dependent on Birgwsri shikla. Anil Boro mention in the book 'A history of Bodo literature' as

*"The narrative of Birgwshri is alive in the folk memory as a legend. She was a woman of heroic quality. By virtue of her bravery and skill, she was appointed Dewan by the Koch king of Bijni. At that time the king of Bijni had to pay tax to*

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<sup>8</sup> Dutta, Kalyannath: Some Aspects of the Study of Literature, p-47 (part five)

<sup>9</sup> Dutta, Kalyannath: Some Aspects of the Study of Literature, P-40 (part five)



*the Bhotia king. The novel shows the tussle between Bigrai and the Bhotiya, besides presenting the cultural relations between these groups of people.*"<sup>10</sup>

'Khaspurni Hangma' and 'Gablani Shao' are also his historical novels. In Bodo, literature historical novel is less. Except Bidyasagar Narzary no one wrote this type of novel. To develop a historical novel writer should try to write this type of novel.

#### **2.4 Detective Novel:**

The detective story is a special branch of crime fiction that focuses attention on the examination of evidence that will lead to the solution of the mystery. Detective novel is also a popular form of literature, where a crime is investigated and the culprits are revealed.

According to M.H. Abrams.

*"A narrative that centers on the sustained, analytic, investigation by an amateur or professional detective of a serious crime, usually a murder. Typically, the crime is committed in a closed environment that limits the number of possible suspects."*<sup>11</sup>

The editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica wrote in the article title 'Detective story',

*"The traditional elements of the detective story are: (1) the seemingly perfect crime, (2) the wrongly accused suspect at whom circumstantial evidence points, (3) the bungling of dim-witted police, (4) the greater powers of observation and superior mind of the detective and (5) the startling and unexpected denouement, in which the detective reveals how the identity of the culprit was ascertained. Detective stories frequently operate on the principle that superficially convincing evidence is ultimately irrelevant. Usually it is also axiomatic that the clues from which a logical solution to the problem can be reached be fairly presented to the reader at exactly the same time that the sleuth receives them*

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<sup>10</sup> Boro, Anil : A History of Bodo Literature, p-80

<sup>11</sup> Abrams, M.H, A Glossary of Literary Terms p-84

*and that the sleuth deduce the solution to the puzzle from a logical interpretation of these clues.”<sup>12</sup>*

This type of plot was shown in some of the Bodo novels. Jara fagla’s ‘Bisni lwithw’ published in 1981 is first Bodo detective novel. Kamalsrang Muchahary’s ‘Sujufinjawi gwrwnthi’, Ranjan’s ‘Fakan’ (2000) are detective novels. But it is also true that Bodo novelist is not successful in this type of novel writing.

## **2.5 Summing up:**

The growth and development of Bodo novel in the truest sense of the term took place during the modern period of Bodo literature with the publication of Chittaranjan Muchahary’s “*Jujaini Or*” in 1962. Mochahary is a prolific writer who has contributed a good number of novels to Bodo fictional literature. His contribution to Bodo fiction is immense and commendable. Chittaranjan Mochahary of course could not influence the literature so much, due to lack of varieties of themes, techniques and styles. Although he has based his novels on realistic theme sometimes he has shown preference for the imaginary situation in his novel. If the Bodo novels are critically examined, it is transparent enough to see that there are novels that deal with varieties of agendas and categorised into the social novel, historical novel, an autobiographical novel, detective novel, etc. In the autobiographical novel, Mina Kherkatary’s ‘Gwrbwni Radai’ is noteworthy. In the case of detective novels, Bodo writers have not succeeded very far. Detective novels are comparatively lesser in numbers. The historical novels are also lesser in number. Bidyasagar Narzary was the first person to write a historical novel. In his novel, “Birgwsrini Thungri” presents folktales. He writes about the life story of a girl Birgwsri and her encounter with the British when they came to Assam. He also shows her dealings with the Bhutanese people. Presenting the story of Birgwsri Sikhla, the novelist also projects another two characters Jaolia Dewan and Gambari Sikhla. Likewise in the second novel, ‘Khaspurni Hangma’ the story and the historical facts of the last Bodo king Govinda Chandra and his lack of an heir to ascend the throne has been shown. This made the British to take control of his

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/art/detective-story-narrative-genre>

kingdom as depicted in the novel. Thus, it could be said that the Bodo novelist were able to present the historical novel in an appreciative manner.

Among the Bodo literature, the social novels are comparatively on a larger scale. The Bodo culture's life style, food habits, cultural economy, socio-political elements of the society are being pictured by the Bodo novelists in their novels. The social problems and hurdles are also shown in their novels. The social problems depicted by the authors in these are real-life incidents. The Bodo novels that have been written are also based on the Bodo people's demand for the Roman script, the movement for separate land of the Bodos, superstitious belief and its ill effects. Tiren Boro's novel 'Bigrai arw Dwisrai' (1992) and Aron Raja's 'Gwrwbwni Twisam' (2000) shows how while the movement for separate land of Bodos was going on, Bodos were ill-treated by the police and military personals. It also shows how the Bodo woman had to lose their most precious property in the hands of the corrupt government and police personals. While demanding a separate state of the Bodos, the conflicts that occurred in the Barpeta district between the Bodos and the Muslims have been mentioned in the novel. The novel of Monoranjan Lahary, 'Daini', 'Hainamuli' has projected the belief of superstitions among the Bodos. He has tried to enlighten the people; and at the same also erase such belief and its effects. The conflict regarding the Bathou Religion can be seen in the novel 'Gwthar Thulugsi'. Other than in these novels the theme of superstitious belief also found its place in other novels directly or indirectly. Monoranjan Lahary's novel 'Kharlung' can be regarded as an open-ended novel. Monoranjan Lahary's portrayal of a strong woman character of 'Alaisri' was successful in the Bodo literature. Alaisri had an aim to be an IAS or IPS officer, but all her dreams were shattered when she was raped by Molen. She was strong enough to get married to her rapist Molen and also decided to punish him. At last, she was successful in doing so. Though the Bodo novels have achieved a new level of success through their novels, the sad part remains on the fact that they are very few in numbers. Therefore, researchers should come up with new vigour to take Bodo novels to a new zenith.