

# Role of Indigenous Knowledge for Folk Culture and Awareness through Assamese Literature in Assam

**Dr. Mulluck Chan Babu(M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D)**

Assistant Professor, Department of Assamese  
Sontali Anchalik College, Kamrup, Assam-781136(India)

## Abstract

In the present study, the investigators decided to find out the role of indigenous knowledge for folk culture and awareness through Assamese literature in Assam. The normative survey method was used. In this paper, researcher is trying to know the positive and negative effects of all these forms of Assamese language, participation on issues of impact of modernity, in case of Assamese literature of Kamrup district in Assam. To know valuable elements of folk culture, one has to observe the activities and behaviours of the common people of the society in Assam. The present study focuses on new tendencies like-absurdism, symbolish, realism, expressionism peeped into Assamese dialectic field of education when contaminated by civilization.. Hence, Assamese language & literature has developed tremendously due to the impact of modernity, as a result the ability requires continued practice and informed guidance counselling and the diverse cultural heritage of all sections of people including the Garo, tribes & sub-tribes.

**Keywords:** Indigenous, Knowledge, Folk Culture, Awareness, Assamese, Literature.

## INTRODUCTION:

We are moving towards the twenty first century which we believe has lots of thing made in every field possible. Some say the knowledge explosion is at its peak. Some say the place will be filled with technocrats and agencies, some say peace and happiness will return on the earth. It is through education that man develops his thinking, reasoning, problem solving, creating, intelligence and aptitude. A balanced development of many dimensions of human personality, i.e. physical, intellectual, moral, emotional, aesthetic, social and spiritual is the key to true education. The challenges of education towards 21<sup>st</sup> century, stress appears when our bodies react to a challenge, mental or physical, by increasing success of the nation is determined by the quality of its citizen. Among the states of the North-East region, Assam has the most varied cultural traditions and mixture of cultures. Assam is rich in natural resources and the fertile land, particularly in the Brahmaputra valley added to the richness of the state. At one point of time, Assam was connected with China by great Silk Route, while, china was connected to the Roman Empire through Assam. From ancient times, different groups of people came to Assam for various reasons-for doing business, for pilgrimage and even as invaders and some stayed back in the state.

As already mentioned that the main ethnic groups of people in India are also found in Assam and the process of cultural assimilation also happened in Assam as occurred in India. As a result, a mixed culture was developed in Assam with the integration of Arya and Anarya.The old name of Assam was Pragiyotishpur and Kamrup. These names are found in old writings including the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Vishnu Puran, Kalika Puran, Yoginitantra, writings of Hiuen Tsang and even in the inscriptions of ancient Royal families. These two Sanskrit words have connected Assam to the Hindu mythology or Hindu astrology and noted scholar Banikanta Kakati was of the view that the words Pragjyotishpur and Kamrup originated from similar words in the Austric language. The Ahoms ruled the state from the 13<sup>th</sup> century. On the hand, it helped the educated indigenous class to critically question their tradition and on the other hand, it facilitated the growth of national awareness.

## Origin of the Present Study:

Among the states of the North-East region, Assam has the most varied cultural traditions and mixture of culture. Assam is a rich natural resources and the fertile land, particularly in the Brahmaputra Valley added to the richness of the state. As already mentioned that the main ethnic groups of people in India are also found in Assam and the process of cultural assimilation also happened in Assam as occurred in India. Nation is not built by bricks and mortars but by the quality of men. It does not require any evidence to say that society and its development are positively correlated to the development of education. An analysis of Assamese language in relation to motivation of learning to write is a complex process yet a pre-requisite for a personal and professional achievement of Assamese language in Assam with especial reference to Kamrup district. There is a need to create awareness towards achieving the desired goal of Assamese literature and resources in the state. As a result, a mixed culture was developed in Assam with integration of Ahoms ruled. This salient origin and need initiated the investigator to work in this area. In the light of the above discussion of the origin as well as significant of the study under investigation, the title of the study has been fixed as, "Role of Indigenous Knowledge for Folk Culture and Awareness through Assamese Literature in Assam". Thus, Origin of folk culture and towards Assamese literature is important to all and everyone's activities have direct or indirect effect on awareness and vice-versa need to be explored.

## Statement of the Problem:

The problem under investigation an entitled is, "Role of Indigenous Knowledge for Folk Culture and Awareness through Assamese Literature in Assam".

## Objectives of the Present Study:

The main objectives of the present study investigation are as follows:

- i). To find out of role of indigenous knowledge for folk culture towards Assamese culture in Assam
- ii). To identify of the awareness with respect to Assamese literature.
- iii). To know valuable elements of folk culture activities and behaviours of the common people of the society in Assam.
- iv). To finds out the way of solutions.

## Limitations of the Study:

The followings are the main limitations of the present research paper:

- a). The present study is delimited to the Assamese literature only.
- b). The study is strictly conducted only one district namely- Kamrup.

## Analysis and Major Findings and Conclusions:

The present study revealed the Analysis and Major Findings and Conclusions as follows:

### Folk Culture:

It is becoming increasingly clear that mankind is now facing the most severe crisis in its history. Assam has a very rich cultural heritage. In addition to the common cultural heritage, every tribe and sub-tribes have their own rich traditional cultural heritage. Every tribe has its own dialects, folk-literatures, ornaments, food habits, housing culture, agriculture, fishing culture, various festivals, style of using cane and bamboo, family & social relationships, customs and traditions, dresses, music, traditional musical instruments etc. The findings from the present study report that the natural feelings and expressions of a society or community are reflected by its folk culture. These traditional cultures practised for years are acquired by the people without any formal training. But a person can understand the tradition of other's culture through especial observation of environmental awareness only through education in Assam. The

social scientists have shown keen interest in the traditional folk cultures of different groups of people of the world. Some experts opined that the name Assam (Asom) emerged from Sanskritization of the words 'a-cham' and 'ha-chom' used by the Ahom and the Bodo people respectively. The definition of indigenous is something or someone who is native to an area or who naturally belongs there or originating or occurring naturally in a particular place, native. An example of indigenous is the native Assamese languages state in Assam. A few elements of folk culture of Assam are briefly analysed and discussed as follows:

### Literature:

The Braman dynasty established in the middle part of the 4<sup>th</sup> century and the following royal dynasty first used Sanskrit and later on Assamese (evolved from Sanskrit) as the official language. However, the modern Assamese language has been formed after crossing various stages from the time of evolving from Sanskrit. From the scriptures of Barman dynasty, Salastambha dynasty, Paul dynasty, Koch royal dynasty and Ahom scriptures this fact comes out. However, the Ahoms used their own Tai language. The modern form of Assamese language Journal "Arunodoi". During the period from 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century, the only written Assamese literature was mostly a collection of songs called Charyapada. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, Hem Saraswati, Rudra Kandali, Haribar Bipra, Kavirantna Saraswati and Madhab Kandali created literature in vesee for based on Purana and other ancient Indian epic. Madhab Kandali was patronized by Barahi King Mahamanikya. Other scholars were patronized by the king of Kamata. It is important to mention that Madhab Kandali translated the Ramayana into Assamese, titled 'Saptakanda Ramayana', which was the first work of translation from Sanskrit into a North Indian language.

The Vaishnavite movement launched by Sankaradeva and Madhabdeva in the 15<sup>th</sup> century influenced the life of the people of Assam in all aspects. This religious movement had a major impact on Assamese literature and a lot of poetry, songs, prose, charit puthi, drama etc. were written during that time. The main subject matters of these literary works were Ramayana, Mahabharata, Purana, theories of Hindu religion etc. Sankaradeva and Madhabdeva themselves wrote a number of classics. Sankaradeva's Kritan, and Madhabdeva's Namghosha and the Borgeets of both the gurus were most popular among these founds the way of solutions.

It can be understood from the plays (Ankiya Naats) of Sankaradeva – Patniprasad, Kaliya Daman, Keli Gopal, Rukmini Haran, Parijat Haran, Ram Bijay; Dadhi Mathan of Madhabdeva and his Jhumuras 'Chordhara' and 'Pimpara Guchowa' etc. are presented before huge gathering of spectators at Namghar and Satras. The first naat (drama) Chihnajatra of Sankaradeva was even written and staged before Shakespeare's drama. The famous textile design of Sankaradeva the Brindabani Bastra was a magnificent creation of the Assamese weavers. This textile design has been preserved in British museum and in a few other famous museums in parts. After Sankaradeva and Madhabdeva, prominent writers like Bhattadev, Ananta Kandali, Ram Saraswati and other kept up the tradition of Assamese literature. The real Assamese prose writing was first introduced by Bhattadeva with his writings like Katha Geeta, Bhagawat Katha, Ratnwali Katha etc. Staying away from the ambit of the Sankari style of writing, writers like Pitambar Kavi, Durgabar Kayastha, Su-kabi Narayandeva, Mankar and others also enriched Assamese literature. They composed story based on lyrics like Devi Manasaa, Padmaa, Sati Beula etc. The 'Padya Geeta' written by Govinda Mishra born in 16<sup>th</sup> century is still widely popular.

The histories written under the patronage of the Ahom kings also enriched Assamese literature. First those were written in the own language of Ahoms, but from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, those were written in Assamese language also. During the British rule, a number of such histories were restored, preserved and printed. Those include Deodhai history, Tungkhungiya history, Kachari history, Jayantiya history, Tripura history, Padya history, Padshyah history etc. The modern Assamese language evolved after the American Baptist Missionaries published the first Assamese magazine Arunodoi in 1846. Generally, the Assamese literature was influenced by various styles and characteristics of European literature. The corpus reveals that the lexical error is the fourth major problem for the learners, next to grammatical and syntactical. It is

observed that the learners have committed errors due to semantic similarities, followed by errors of lexical mix-selection and over generalization.

### **Bihu Festival of Assam:**

Bihu is the community festival of Assam. Three Bihu festivals are observed in Assam- Bohag (Rangali) bihu, Kati (Kongali) bihu and Magh (Bhogali) bihu are also observed in the months of Bohag (Baishag), Kati (Kartik) and Magh respectively. Bihu is celebrated by all people of Assam with traditional gaiety. The Bohag bihu is celebrated from the last day of Assamese month of Sot (Chait) to the first six days of Bohag. The last day of the Sot month is called the Sankranti or Domahi and that day is observed as :Garu Bihu” (Bihu festival for the cows). Cows are an important part in the life of the Assamese person, who mostly depends on agriculture and that is why the day is dedicated in the name of cows. Cows are especially treated on that day. On that day, cows are given a good bath in the rivers and ponds. The first day of the month of Bohag is called “ Manuh Bihu” (Bihu for the human). People wear new cloths on that day and the younger ones seek blessings from the elders. Different sports and cultural activities are organized in public places. Bihu naam (Huchari) followed by bihu dance are performed by the groups of people in all houses. The hosts welcome them and seek blessings. The women of Upper Assam perform typical Jeng bihu. Different communities of Assam observe Baha bihu with their own style in a befitting manner. Bodo, Rabha, Karbi, Missing, Deuri, Tiwa etc. communities have different dresses, songs customs to observe bihu in a very colourful manner. The vast Assamese culture means these multicolour cultures of all ethnic groups of people. The people also greet each other with “Bihuwans”. Different tribes of the state also observe Bihu with their own traditional ways. Some of the old traditions of observing Bihu are not seen in modern times. Instead, cultural programmes and different sports activities are organized in public places in towns and cities as well as Villages. Perhaps, Ahom King Rudra Singha first organised Bihu in public place by organizing the festival in the courtyard of Rong Ghar. The bihu dance is accompanied by some instruments like Dhol (Drum), horn pipe (pepa), flutes (siphong of Bodos), gagana etc., which are different in different communities. Some othe festivals are observed in some places which are homogenous to Bahag bihu. Among those, Deul in Darrang, Bhatheli, Suweri, Bar Gopal etc. in old (undivided) Kamrup, Baash puja in Goalpara are important among these founds the way of solutions..

Assam has a rich tradition of folk songs, which are sung on different occasions and in different environments. Some of these have been obsolete and others are flowing with force. Marriage songs (biya naam), appeasing song (nisukani geet) Kamrupi and Goalparia folk songs are most popular among other folk songs like Aainam, Dhainaam, Dotara (tokari) song, chiyageet, Nangeli geet (cow-boys song), Cherradhek etc. In conclusion therefore, the researcher ardently hopes that this important field of investigation would be continued and carried over with the passage of time. The whole Assamese society is like a book to study the folk culture of it. Therefore, to know valuable elements of folk culture, one has to observe the activities and behaviours of the common people of the society in Assam among these founds the way of solutions..

### **Remedial Measures:**

The focus in this issue is on putting education in values and for character building on the national agenda. Keeping in view the above obstacles the following suggestions are forwarded to increase the extent of indigenous is the native Assamese languages state in Assam influenced. Therefore, the whole society is like a book to study the folk culture of it. To know valuable elements of folk culture, one has to observe the activities and behaviours of the common people of the society. Hence, finally the findings of this study the folk culture of Assam means the diverse cultural heritage of all sections of people including the tribes and sub-tribes. Following suggestion may guide in making fields more authentic. A study may be conducted on vast area sample may be large in size and other stated may be taken. A study may be conducted on vast area sample may be large in size and other stated may be taken. From the above analysis, discussions, findings and conclusions as well as further suggestions revealed that developmental change in the strategy of using the role of indigenous knowledge for folk culture towards Assamese culture perspectives of in Assam.

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