

ABSTRACT

Social Reformation, Kalicharan Brahma and Bodo Society: A Sociological Study

The study explain the reformation of Bodo society in the light of Kalicharan Brahma and his socio-religious movement contextualized in six villages namely Gombiraghat, Maliahgoi, Gombrikhata, Harjhora, Kazigaon and Bongshhijhora in Kokrajhar district of Assam. Reformation means renewal or restoration. It is a process or act of changing a political, societal or religious institution for the betterment. Webster dictionary define reformation as the act or process of improving something or someone by removing or correcting faults, problem etc.

Reformation of a society came from four sources like- religion, state, political party and individual. State can bring reformation in a society by implementing laws, introducing policies and programme etc but individual reformer want to bring change in limited area of a society. A social reformer always aims to correct the problem or short coming the society faces.

Indian society witnessed various reform movements from 19th century onwards and almost all societies whether rural and urban agrarian an industrial, Hindu and Muslim, tribal or non-tribal experience reformation and change at various level. Tribes are ethnic group. 'Tribe' generally defines as "socially cohesive unit, associated with a territory, the members of which use distinct dialect and distinct cultural traits (Vidyut Joshi, 1998). Generally it is believe that tribal's like to live in isolation and also want to keep their custom and tradition untouched. But this conception i.e. not fully correct, history of India witness a series of tribal rebellion during the early days of the Colonial rule like Birsa movement (1895-1900) among the Mundas, Santhal rebellion (1857-1858) etc. A part from this series of reform movement also took place among different tribal communities of the country like- Bhagat movement among Oraon, Konwar movement among the Santhal, Sengkhasi movement among the Khasi etc. (<http://www.sociologyguide.com/tribal-society/tribal-solidarity>. Downloaded on 2/3/2016). Similarly among the Bodo tribe, reformation took place under the leadership of Kalicharan Brahma.

Various studies on tribal social change have mainly attempted to thoroughly examine the historical, cultural, educational, political, economic change of tribal society. But the pattern and direction of change varies from one tribal society to another and for bringing change religious belief and practice of tribal plays significant role. Therefore for understanding the impact of Kalicharan Brahma's socio-religious movement on contemporary Bodo society of Kokrajhar district the social, economic political, religion and other dimensions of social life is taken into consideration. The primary data are extensively used in the study. To find out the impact of Kalicharan Brahma and his movement data were collected from 300 households (50 household from each village) on random sampling basis. To reveal the pattern of reformation that takes place in Bodo society due to Kalicharan the interview schedule tried cover question related to family, marriage, customary law, religion, rituals, education, political awareness and participation, contribution to literature and so on administered to the respondents. Along with this historical and documentary data also extensively use in writing biography of Kalicharan, understanding traditional Bodo society etc.

The following are the Objective of the study

1. To understand Kalicharan Brahma as a social reformer of Bodo society.
2. To analyze the philosophy of Brahma religion in the light of *Boroni Pandulipi*.
3. To study the effect of *Brahma religion* in realm of life of Bodo.

To achieve the objectives the study attempted the following Hypothesis

1. Kalicharan Brahma is the main architect of Bodo reformation and society.
2. Brahma religion vis-à-vis Boroni Pandulupi initiated a new age for Bodo.
3. *Bodo Maha Sanmilan* in early 20th century has major impact on Bodo social organization.

Life of Kalicharan Brahma

Kalicharan Brahma was born in 1862 and died in 1938. His eventful life began in his native village Kazigaon. His father Koula Mech was a rich timber trader and land lords and mother Rangdini Mech was devout housewife. Kalicharan was educated up to primary level only but his quest for knowledge led him to study different types of religious books and other subjects like

history, social science, philosophy etc. He was a self-taught wise person and had a deep insight. Kalicharan Brahma married twice, first wife's was Khamshri and second one Upasi. He had seven children from two wives. In spite of leading family life he always thought for the betterments of Bodo society. The different types of superstitious beliefs and practices, educational and economic backwardness of his community gave him pain. He was keen to find out the solution of these problems. After adopting Brahma religion from Swami Siva Narayana, Kalicharan introduced Brahma Dharma as a new religious movement in Bodo society. With the introduction of Brahma Dharma, Kalicharan wanted to bring a socio-religious reformation in the Bodo society. For doing this he travelled different parts of the state with his followers. Till the end of his life Kalicharan Brahma worked for the development of Bodo society. He is popularly known by the name of Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma. He died on 25th April 1938 at the age of 76 years.

Major Findings

Socio-economic background of the Respondents

1. In all the six villages' majority of people belongs to young and middle age group. As it is found that 40.26% villagers belong to the age group of 1-15 years, 30.78% belongs to the age group of 16-30 years. It can be said that majority of population belongs to child followed by youth and old age.
2. In these villages more than fifty percent respondents are married, 32.33% are unmarried, 5.67% are widow, 3.67% are widower and 1.67% is divorced. Divorce is not a rare phenomenon among the Bodos. Widow, widower and divorce remarriage are allowed among the Bodos. But it largely depends upon age of the person. The preferable age for remarriage of a widow and female divorce is up to 35 and male up to 45 years of age. But all the widow and widower of the studied villages are above 45 years of age. So, possibility is very less for their remarriage.
3. Regarding the age at marriage it is found that none of the villagers get married before attaining legal age and physical maturity. The upper and lower age limit for the villagers is between 21-35 years that is 15 years and a negligible portion of villagers get married before attaining 21 years of age after crossing 35 years of age. Thus a tendency of late marriage prevails among the villages. It may be due to modern education.

4. Both joint and nuclear families are found in these villages near 51% respondents belong to joint and 49% respondents belong to nuclear family. Regarding the size of family it is found that 36.63% respondents family have 5-6 members, 25% respondents have 7-8 members, 21.33% have 3-4 members, 9.33% have 1-2 member and 7.67% respondents have 9 and more family members. Nine tenth joint families and two fourth nuclear families have 5-8 members. So it shows that overall size of nuclear family is large whereas sizes of joint family of these villages are neither too small nor too large.

5. Literacy is the predominant features of these six villages only 16% respondents of these villages are illiterate and rest are educated at various levels. Educational Qualification of these villages ranges from primary to post graduate level and not much gender gap are found in regards to educational qualification.

6. Occupational mobility is found in all these Bodo villages. Around 43% villagers engaged in traditional occupation that is agriculture and wage labor and rest of them engage in different other sector like, 23% respondents are government servant 15% respondents are shop keeper and 8.33% are house wife, 10% respondents engaged in private sector for maintaining their livelihood.

7. The villager's practices settled cultivation but on the basis of ownership of agricultural land it may be divided into two types. It is found that either villagers cultivated in their own lands or cultivated in others land. It is also found that 68.67% respondent practices agriculture in their own land whereas rest of the people cultivated others land on lease based. Lease is given on the basis of agreement like cultivators have to give fifty percent of agricultural product to the owner of the land. In all the six villages both the types of cultivator are found. Near three fourth cultivator of Kazigaon, Gombiraghat and Malighoi and more than two third cultivators of Gombrikhata, Harjhora, and Bongshijhora cultivated in their own land and rest of the farmer cultivated other land on lease basis.

8. All the respondents have some amount of cultivable land. 31.33% respondents have 1-5 bighas of land, 39% respondents have 6-20 bighas of land, 22.66% respondents have 21-30 and above bighas of land. The villagers inform that those who have 1-5 bighas of land, they have to cultivate

other land also on the lease basis because cultivating 1-5 bighas are not sufficient for maintaining livelihood.

9. The villagers are not aware about multiple cropping in one land nor do they have the facility for this. So most of the villagers produce crops once in a year and rest of the time the field remain abandoned .Around 65.67% respondents produce only rice, 18% respondent produce two types of agriculture product like rice and vegetable and 16.33%respondents produce three types of agricultural product like rice, fruit and vegetable. The scenario is almost same in Gombiraghat, Kazigaon, Malighoi, Harjhora, Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora.

10. For producing agricultural product the villagers still followed traditional method. Most using agricultural implements are chopper, spade and plough. Very few started to modern implements like power tiller and tractor etc. 68.32% respondent still uses traditional agricultural implements, spade ,chopper and plough, Whereas 31.66% respondents have modern agricultural implements like power tiller and tractor. Again the use of modern agricultural implements for cultivation by one fourth respondents shows the initiation of modernization of agriculture in these villages.

11.Village wise, it can be said that near three fourth of the respondents of all the six villages still use traditional implements for cultivation and more than one fourth respondents started to use modern implements for cultivation.

12. Domesticating animal is a common feature of Bodo villages. Every household of Bodo village pet one or other animal .Kazigaon Gombiraghat, Malighoi, Harjhora, Gombrikhata and Bongshijhora also not exception in this regard. All the respondents domesticate one or other types of animal. It also found that the villagers keep six types of animal like cow, buffalo, ducks, hen, and pig and got. 35% respondents have two types of animal like duck and hen (7.67%), duck and goat (6.67%), cow and pig (15.33%) and pig and hen (6%), 37.99% respondents have three types of animal such as duck, hen and cow (10.33%), duck, cow and goat (13.33%), cow, pig and hen (14.33%) and 26.33% respondents have one types of animal like cow (24%) and Buffalo (2.33%).

13. The villagers keep animal for agriculture and other purpose like cultivation, milk, egg, meat and trade. In short, the villagers keep animal for meeting their dietary as well as monetary requirement.

14. The respondent's monthly income ranges from Rs.5000 to Rs.20000 19.67% respondents monthly income are Rs. 19000 to Rs. 20000, 18% respondents monthly income are Rs. 17000 to Rs. 18000, 14.33% respondents monthly income are Rs. 15000 to Rs. 16000, 14% respondents monthly income are Rs. 13000 to Rs. 14000, 11.33% respondents monthly income are Rs. 11000 to Rs. 12000, 9.67% respondents monthly income are Rs. 9000 To Rs. 10000, 7.67% respondents monthly income are Rs. 7000 to Rs. 8000 and 5.33% respondents monthly income are Rs. 5000 to Rs. 6000.

15. It is found that socio-economic background of the respondents of Gombiraghat, Maliahgoi, Gombrikhata, Harjhora, Kazigaon and Bongshhijhora consist of age, family, marriage, education, occupation, monthly income etc. Economy of these villages is based on agriculture and allied activities. They are neither too rich nor too poor as their monthly income ranges from 5000-20000 Rs. Both joint and nuclear family are found in the villages and literacy is the predominant feature of these villages.

Kalicharan Brahma, Reformation and Bodo Society

For understanding this the discussion is made on three parts - First part depicts social condition of traditional Bodo society; second part highlights Kalicharan Brahma's philosophy and idea, and the third part talk about Kalicharan and Bodo society.

Traditional Bodo Society

1. The Bodo (Kachari) are the descendents of the Mongoloid race. They are the plain tribe of the North East India, particularly of Assam. So far as the origin of the Bodos is concerned, it can be stated that Tibet and China were the original homes of the Bodos from where they had migrated much before Aryan.

2. Bodos are tribe endogamous group. They have clan and each clan has its own professions since ancient times. Bodo society is based on totamistic clannish divisions. The clan system otherwise had no other implication on their inter tribe, tribe-non tribe marriage, inter-dining and other social activities. Bodos are divided into a number of clans such as Basumatary, Bodosa, Bodo, Brahma, Bwiswmuthiary, Dwimary, Goyari, and Ishlary and so on.

3 The Bodo society is patriarchal in nature. The Bodo Descendent and property goes through male line, however, the mother and the other female members of the family are not neglected. In the family matter, all major decisions are taken by father or husband not the mother or wife. Some-times head of the family along with the Priest or Douri (male priest), takes the decisions of the family. Both the joint and nuclear family were found in traditional Bodo society too.

4. Traditional Bodo society considered marriage as a social contact but marriage ritual as sacred. It is performed after receiving social and religions sanction. After marriage, it is the responsibilities of the couple to maintain their social and family life.

5. On the basis of the form of mate selection Bodo marriage system may be divided into six (6) types. These are Arranged marriage (*Habagwmwn arw Hinjao Swngnai haba*), Obtaining the girl by rendering service to the parent and family (*Gwrjia Haba*), Marriage by ritual consent and elopement (*Kharsonai Haba*), Marriage by capturing (*Hinjao Bwnai Haba*) , Marriage by elopement (*Dwnkharnai Haba*) , Widow re-marriage (*Dongkha Habnai Haba*) .

6. Traditional religion of Bodo is known as 'Bathou'. Bathouism represent five deep philosophical thought. Whereas some other said that Bathouism represent five basic element of nature like, bar (air), dwi (water), ha (earth), or (fire) and ukrank (sky). The supreme deity of Bathouism is Bathou Bwrai which is the creator and controller of all five elements. The word 'Bwrai' means old man. The follower of Bathouism believes that Bathou Bwrai is the illuminator of all earthly objects; source of all knowledge's and lights. Bodos believes that the Bathou Bwrai after creating the physical form of a man with the composite elements, he confers his spirit to the inanimate body which displays as the totality of living being's body. So, Bathou is a religion and the philosophy that explain the embodiment of the spirituality of the creator or the God

7. Bathou follower considers Sizou plant (*Euphorbia splendens*) as a sacred plant. Sizou plant is the living symbol of Bathou Bwrai, the supreme God. The follower of Bathouism does not worship any idols but made an alter in the place of Bathou worship and in the midst of the altar they planted Sizou plant. All the family who followed Bathouism must make a Bathousali in the North Eastern corner of the courtyard and plant a Sizou plant in the midst of the altar. Karai puja and garja puja are the two important festivals of Bathousim.

8. The economy of traditional Bodo society was based on agriculture and allied activity like cultivation, fishing, animal husbandry while some other adopted occupation like hilling, witch doctor, priest or 'ojha' etc. The Bodos are mainly concerned with producing those things which can meet their daily need and requirement. Traditional Bodo society has struggled very hard to meet their economic need.

9. Like other tribe Bodo also have their village administrative system which is known by the name of 'Gamini Afad'. The Gamini Afad consists by headman (Gami Gwra), Secretary (Nehatary), Cashier (Rang Kubir) and Public Relation Officer (Halmaji). The office is responsible for running the administration of village, security as well as protects the economy interest of the villagers. It basically settled property disputes, divorce, domestic violence, maintenance of social practices and customary laws etc. Gamini Gwra is assisted by the Nehatary or secretary, Rangkubir or Cashier and Halmaji public relation officer for performing this function. Irrespective of sex everybody have equal right to attend the meeting of Gamini Afad.

10. Kalicharn's main motto was to establish monotheistic worship of one Supreme Being. He propagates for simplification of rituals and scarification of evil idea of self not the animal. Like other reformer of India, Kalicharan too realized the need of reformation of Bodo society in the light of western values and ideas of rationalism

11. Kalicharan wanted Bodos should learn from the west, but this learning was not an imposition of western value. He believed on fusion of eastern and western cultural values and ideas.

Part II

Kalicharan Brahma's philosophy and idea

1. Kalicharan Brahma was a great figure of Bodo society who made considerable efforts to reform the society. He is known as the founder of modern Bodo society. Kalicharan Brahma was aware of country's awakening and also conscious about renaissance and reform movement that took place in different parts of the country.

2. Though Kalicharan had great honor for traditional social but at the same time he firmly believe that unless some reformative work was undertaken, Bodo community would soon meet its

downfall. Because during his time Bodo society was plagued by different kinds of social evil like illiteracy, superstition, poverty, ill health, alcoholism, witch hunting, forcefully marriage etc.

3. Kalicharan was not ready to accept the neglect and inferior status given to them by upper caste people especially by upper caste Assamese Hindus. The Bodo called by the non Bodo as 'Mlech' that is inferior people. They were not allowed to mix with people belonging to upper castes. They were considered as untouchables. Only because of this attitude of others towards Bodos many of them got converted themselves into different religions such as Christianity, Islam, etc (Satyendra Mondal Nath, 2011).

4. Kalicharan therefore, stood for the reformation of Bodo society by introducing new religion called 'Brahma' Dharma. Kalicharan was against the conversion of Bodo into Christianity, Islamism and others.

5. Kalicharan Brahma always dreamt for a self-reliant and financially sound Bodo society. Besides he wants Bodo people to join in different government and private jobs, he also encouraged them to start their own business or enterprises. In this regard he established 'Brahma Company' to help poor Bodo people to uplift their economy.

6. Kalicharan's reformative and rational views have great effect on Bodo society. Large numbers of people followed him and adopt Brahma religion. Contemporary Bodo society considered him as their social reformer and spiritual guru.

7. Philosophy of Gurudev Kalicharan Brahma is like: a) Love all equally b) Think progressively c) Do something for the upliftment of society to succeed in life we need education d) Be a truth seeker and f) God is one. In his philosophy there lies the ingredient of Upanishads and Geeta.

8. As a social reformer he reminded Raja Ram Mohan Roy. There is a touch of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy too in his concept of work culture, self employment (self engagement) to improve home economy. He was against rearing pigs and preparing and drinking wines or rice beers. In Sanskrit language there is a saying, 'Modotmodeyom peyom nirgraha' its meaning is, "DON'T GIVE WINE TO ANYBODY, DON'T DRINK AND DON'T ACCEPT."

Part III

Kalicharan and Bodo society

1. Vast difference are found between Contemporary and traditional Bodo society. Lots of changes, reformation and development took place in Bodo society. It cannot be said that these changes and development took place only due to Government policy and programme. But the reformation of Kalicharan Brahma and his effort laid the foundation that people can able to accept the various Government policies and programme and other changes positively.

2. Kalicharan died long ago but still be alive in the mind of people as 40% respondents are fully awareness about Kalicharan Brahma, 31.67% of respondents are familiar with his name, 15.67% of respondents are familiar with his name but partially aware about his work, 13% of respondents are familiar with him and fully aware about his works and contribution.

3. Kalicharan Brahma during his life time did lots work for the betterment of Bodo society. He made an organization called Bodo Maha Sanmilony in 1021 for organizing Bodo society. The Bodo Maha Sanmilan mostly emerged with a view to (i) remove social evils, (ii) upliftment women's position and (iii) spread of education etc. The first conference of Bodo Maha Sanmilan was held in 1921.

4. The first conference of Bodo Maha Sanmiloni takes some resolutions these are: (i). Bodo Maha Sanmilan will conduct state level conference annually(ii) Executive Committee of the Sanmilan will be reformed in every annual conference (iii)Steps should be taken for upliftment women's condition in society(iv)Publication of annual magazine in Bodo language for spread of knowledge and encouraged creative writing among the people(v)To establish Primary and Middle school in the Bodo dominated area(vi)Taboos were imposed on liquor consumption in socio-religious festivals and ceremonies(vii) It also takes the resolution to fixed bride price of Rs.51.

5. With the formation of this organization, especially after first conference of Bodo Maha Sanmilan, Bodo hitherto consider them degraded and lower section of society realized that they also have their own identity. They can improve their condition by giving up of evil practices instead of converting themselves to other religion. These organizations create a hope among the Bodos in general and Brahma follower in particular for improving their socio-economic,

educational condition. Practically Bodo Maha Sanmilan act as an agency of implementing Kalicharan's idea and belief, plans.

6. It is the Maha Sanmilan which gives the platform to the Bodos to find out solution of different problems of their societ.While discussing with the members of Sanmilan the idea of unique customary laws came in the mind of Kalicharan Brahma.

7. All credit for compilation of Bodo customary law and bringing it in written form goes to Kalicharan Brahma. It is only because of his effort and hard works Bodo customary law in the name of Bodoni Pandulipi came into existence in 1934.The Pandulipi consist of 126 points related to do's and do not.

8. Traditional customary law deals with misconduct or deviant behaviors under five 'Baad'. The word baad represents the act of unholiness and baadua that is sinner. The five baad of Bodo customary laws are namely-(1), Ogor baad (2), Fongslod baad (3), Daoki baad (4) Kawali baad and (5) Khoulabwr baad.

9. In spite of all these Baad, Bodos also have number of custom related to birth, death, marriage, property, rituals and beliefs etc. Some of their customary practices and punishment system were barbaric in nature. In the name of protecting ethnic identity or protecting society from misdeed the influential person of society became dictator and exploit poor innocent people.

10. Again traditional customary laws and nature of punishment varies from village to village. These things made Kalicharan to think about modification and implementation of unique customary laws for all the Bodos living in Assam. Being a social reformer, he realized that some of their customary practices stood in the way of the progress of society. He also realized that one of the major hurdles in the path of development of the Bodos was their disunity. He felt that this could be reproved to a great extent, if common social laws were formed and equally implement on them. This thought leads him to work for compilation of Bodo customary law and bring it in written form.

11. The code and conduct of Bodoni Pandulipi tried to protect the interest of all the section of society along with propagating Brahma religion. The Pandulipi was implemented for the Brahma follower only but later with certain modification Bodos belonging to other religion started to

follow it. Though it was not legally codified but it prescribed do's and do not which traditionally followed by the Bodos.

12. The Bodoni Pandulipi implemented near seventy-five years ago according to the need of then Bodo society especially Brahma followers. But with the passes of time lots of change occurs in the country's socio-economic, political sphere which effect all the communities and ethnic groups. So, lots of change came in Bodo society also. With this changing environment number of code and conduct of Bodoni Pandulipi appeared meaningless. Like restriction on young girls for visiting markets, raring pig, taking wine, fine imposed for various misconduct is too less in present time.

13. Though major modification of Pandulipi is not done yet but practically change came in the implementation of code and conduct, for example amount fine. Now, different village charge different amount of fine for violating social rules.

14. As Pandulipi was implemented in 1934 at that time most of the respondents were not born but even then around 79.33% respondents are awareness about Bodoni Pandulipi and 20.67% are not aware about Pandulipi. Though they not aware Pandulipi by name but they have full knowledge about rules and regulation of their society.

15. Some of the respondents are of the view that certain rules and regulation too strict or have no meaning. They said that according to requirement of contemporary society there is a need to bring change on the code and conduct of their customary laws. 77.67% respondent does not want any modification to customary law, 14.33% respondents want partial modification and 8% want total modification of customary law. Those who want modification of Bodoni Pandulipi among them 35.82% want modification of taboos imposed on caste-tribe and inter-tribe marriage, 34.32% want modification of code and conduct related to foods and drinks, 20.90% want modification of laws related to fine and fee of Douris and 10.44% want modification of fine amount only.

Kalicharan Brahma: A Champion of Bodo Education

1. Kalicharan Brahma was not only a social and religious reformer but also a great educational reformer. He believed that without education, upliftment of Bodo society is not possible. So, he advocated the introduction of Western ideology based education system in Bodo society.

2. But Kalicharan found main hurdle for educating Bodos is the paucity of schools in the Bodo dominated areas and parents reluctance of sending their children to school. So in this regard he took initiative for establishing school in his locality .his effort finally bring result and one Middle English School at Tipkai with two vocational courses was established in 1912.

3. As a result educational process began in Kazigaon areas. But Kalicharan's dream was much broader then establishing one school. So, he planned to work for opening more school as well as convinced the people to send their children to school for education. To facilitate school going Bodo students, Kalicharan established two hostel namely Brahma Boarding in Dubhri in 1896 and Mess Boarding.

4. Gradually Kalicharan's effort bring result as contemporary Bodo society produced large number highly qualified youths and they holds number of responsible posts in government and non government sectors. Though overall literacy level of Bodos is lower than national average but in comparison to pre-independence period it is much better as only 16% respondents of these villages are illiterate and rest are educated at various levels.

Contribution to Language and Literature

1. Kalicharan's contribution to literature is very highly valuable. Later part of his life Kalicharan realized the important of mother tongue and he advocated for the development and implemented Bodo language in literature and writing. He first tried to create awareness among the people about writing culture.

2. Bodo's has long tradition of oral literature but history of written literature was started during British period due to the effort of Christian Missionary. Kalicharan Brahma also made an effort to revive the traditional Bodo folk lore. His song "*Honwi Sanjaha Swrang Jabai....*" (Look the sun has risen in the East...) is one of the pioneering work Bodo language and literature. Apart

from his socio-religious reform movement, he made immense contribution of developing and regenerating Bodo literature

3. The history of Bodo literature can be divided into three (3) phases. First phase, from 1906-1919, second phase from 1920-1951 and third phase from 1952 to present period. The 19th century of Bodo literature was the handiwork of Christian Missionaries. The first phase 1906-1919, the Bodo literature was influenced by Kalicharan Brahma's reform movement and its section of South Goalpara writer. The second phase lead by 'Bodo Chattra Sanmillani' and the third phase or contemporary phase of Bodo literature began with the birth of Bodo Sahitya Sabha in 1952(M.R. Lahary, 1984).

4. The First literary magazine 'Bibar' (The Flower) emerge under the patronize of Kalicharan Brahma in 1919. The first issue of Bibar came out in hand written form but from second issue it started to come out in printed form. Basically those who associated Kalicharan during compilation of Bodoni Pandulipi, Kalicharan insisted them for writing some prose, poetry in Bodo language and also told them to make it habit for enriching Bodo literature. The founder editor of Bibar was Satish Chandra Basumatary was also one of the active members of the formation of Tribal League in 1933 (Brahma, 1992).

5. Not only first phase of Bodo literature influence by Kalicharan Brahma but other phase also directly or indirectly enrich by Kalicharan's idea and thought. Kalicharan Brahma's compilation of 'Bodoni Pandulipi' in Bodo language not only contributes to social reformation but also developed the prose writing in Bodo language. In his compilation he made it is customary to respect and recognition of mother tongue. He also instructed that book should be written in Bodo language and medium of instruction of school should be Bodo in nature. Pandulipi also made the rule that all religious song, hymns etc. should be sung in Bodo language.

6. Today Bodo literature started to flourish like any other advance society's literature. Contemporary Bodo societies have number of periodicals and journals like: Boro *Lirtum Bilai* (1950), *Arangni Laijam* (1957), Drama and Prose collection, Poetry collection, novels etc. A large number of Bodo whether he lives in rural or urban area contributing for enriching the literature till today. Some people of studied village also developed writings skill which serves

two purposes like- it enrich Bodo literature on the one hand and encourage the creativity of the people on the other.

7. 5.66% respondents of these villages has writing skills among them 2.33% respondents has written short story, 2% respondents has written poetry and 1.33% respondents has written prose to contribute to literature.

8. For enriching Bodo literature All Bodo Students Union annually published magazine. This union works at Central, District and Anchalik level. The Anchalik level committee is formed mainly 15-20 villages. Along with other work Anchalik Committee also published yearly magazine with the contribution of the people of its villages. The entire studied villages came under Kazigaon Anchalik committee ABSU. So, it gives the opportunity to the villagers for publishing their work.

Kalicharan Brahma's Contribution to Economic Development

1. Being a successful business man, Kalicharan also wanted more and more Bodo should come forward and start business. But when he practically tried to implement the idea, he found that shortage of capital was the main hurdle for starting business by the Bodos. So he decided provide financial aid to those who want to start timber business. For this, he established 'Brahma Company' in 1912 with an object to provide financial assistance to the Bodo timber merchant.

2. Brahma Company failed due to anomalies and corruption along with misappropriation of money by the employees. After that, Kalicharan made another organization in 1925 name 'Gram Hiteisi Samiti' (village welfare society) with an aim to (i) Spiritual and social reformation (i) Economic progress.

3. The Gram Hiteishi Samiti decided to provide monetary help to poor farmers, so that they can purchase agricultural equipments, livestock, seeds etc. This programme was more effective and helped the poor farmers of Kazigaon and nearby villages and soon gets popularity. The office bearers of that samiti travelled one village to another village and educate the farmers about modern agricultural method, rotation of crops, etc. Later part of his life Kalicharan established

another organization by the name of 'Ryot Sabhas' in Kazigaon village. He was the President of this sabha and members were drowning from poor section of farmer of the village. The aim of this organization was to help the poor.

Kalicharan Brahma's Contribution to Political Development

1. Kalicharan realized that all his effort for socio-economic and religious development of Bodos would not bring fruitful result unless it mobilized politically on the one hand and participating Bodo people in decision making process on the other hand. He also undertook programs for creating political consciousness among Bodos. However, Kalicharan Brahma's vision for development was not confined to Bodos only. He also encouraged other tribes to move towards the path of development. The "Assam Plains Tribal League", one of the earliest tribal political parties of Assam, was formed in 1930 in his inspiration. This party demanded reservation of seats for the tribal's in Assam assembly.

2. Kalicharan Brahma submitted memorandum to the Simon Commission in Shilling. A delegation of six members lead by Kalicharan Brahma met the commission on 4th January 1929 and submitted a memorandum containing twelve (12) point of demand on behalf of entire Bodo community. The memorandum urged the Government to grant a separate electorate for the Bodo-Kachari community both in the Assembly and local board elections, to provide compulsory free primary education to the students of this community, Special representation of Bodo and other tribes in Assam Legislative Council and local bodies etc.

3. After the Independence, the League leaders transformed the Tribal League into a socio-cultural organization known as the "**Tribal Sangha**", thinking that the Independences would address their grievances without having to go for political movements; Bodo leaders like Rupnath Brahma, Dharanidhar Basumatari, Rabindra Kachari and others joined Congress, and were able to come in political forefront of the State.

4. The Bodos are more politically conscious now than ever. Large number of them participate political activities either by casting of vote, contesting election and work for political party during the election. As 79% respondents of these villages are cast their vote in Council, Assembly and Parliament election and 21% respondents are not cast their vote in any election process.

5. For casting vote in election process generally people are motivated by others like political party, friend, family members. In the studied village it is found that 43.45% respondents are self motivated, 26.58% respondents are motivated by their husband, father, and son, 15.61% respondents are motivated by village headmen 14.34% respondents are motivated by political party.

6. Large number of people casted their vote in election process but very less are actively participate in political party, only two respondents of Kazigaon contest for the membership of VCDC (Village Council Development Committee) and none of the respondents of other five village contest election. Similarly it is also found that 98% respondents are not member of any political parties and 6% respondents are the member of political party.

Brahma Religion and Contemporary Bodo Society

1. Brahma Dharma with which we are familiar with is a monotheistic religion believe the existing of one supreme unseen being called Brahma. Brahma religion is the off spring of Brahma Samaj movement. Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) established Brahma Samaj with a view of reformation of Hindu society. His religious philosophy and social outlook was deeply influenced by anti-idolatry of Islamism, theism of Sufism, ethical teaching of Christianity and so on. Raja Ram Mohan Roy tried to interpret and assimilate into himself the highest element of Islamism, Christianity and modern rationalism or Hinduism and transformed them into a single creed which found in the ancient Upanishad philosophy of his own community (Buch, M.A 1938).

2. The Brahma Dharma or Brahma religion was codified by Devendra Nath Tagore (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brahma_Dharma downloaded on 14/08/16.) The Brahma dharma become the source of every faith on Brahma and reflects the rejection of Hindu Vedas shift away from Raja Ram Mohan Roy's concept of vedantic unitary god.

3. The religious faith that preaches among the Bodos by Kalicharan Brahma is also known as 'Brahma Dharma.' But it is a matter of doubt whether Kalicharan's version of Brahma religion and Brahma Dharma which was flourished in Bengal under the leadership of Debendranath Tagore are same. As history reveals that Kalicharan was influenced by reading a book name

‘*Saranritya Kriya*’ written by Swami Shivanarayana Paramahansa. Later Kalicharan met with Swamiji and converted himself. Much is not known about Swamiji and his work.

4. Brahma Dharma of Kalicharan Brahma also believed that there is a supreme being known as Param Brahma, who is ultimate reality. “Brahma is by nature eternally and absolute blissful.” The basic principle of Bodo Brahma religion is that Brahma is eternal, self realized, self perfect and self enjoying. He also posses the unique power of creating from within himself or manifesting himself as the phenomenal world of divinity without the least prejudice to perfect unity of his self existence (Banerjee, 2010).

5. Like mainstream Brahma religion, Kalicharan version is also belief on unseen transcendent reality as the creator, protector of the universe. Like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Kalicharan also believed that god cannot be satisfied by offering animal blood, wine etc rather only soul hearted prayer can please him. He was in favor of simplification rituals. He also wants to check the conversion Bodo’s into other religion especially Christianity and Islamism. So, he tried to convert the Bathou follower to Brahma religion and relentless work towards his mission to transform the Bodo into monotheism.

6. The basic principles of Bodo Brahma Religion are: (i) One unseen, supreme power is there who create and hold this universe (ii) Only prayer and offering of fire oblation (Yojnahuti) can help one to get his blessing. (iii) People can get salvation by following good and pure life (Brahma, 2006).

7. Tribal ritual pattern related to more custom and activities and less prayer and hymn. But Kalicharan introduce Vedic pattern of rituals system. The rituals of Brahma religion based on fire oblation (Yojnahuti) towards Lord Brahma and cheating the Gayatry Mantra. Kalicharan instructed his follower to perform only Yojnahuti for birth, marriage and death rituals.

7. The motto of Kalicharan was not only to propagate Brahma religion but to bring change in Bodo society. Some socio-religious practice of Bodos were looked down upon by the Hindus and considered them ‘Mlechas’ (lower grade). So, Kalicharan want to raise the status of his community in the eye of other by giving up of some evil practices and adopting some new custom and practices of caste Hindu society. It can be said that he want to Sanskritise his community by following Vedic rituals, code and conduct of caste Hindu society.

8. After the death of Kalicharan Brahma, his disciple Phwrlang Babaji original name Nepal Chandra Basumatary carries out his movement. Phwrlang Babaji established the Jyoti Ashram in 1965 at Roumari of Chirang district which is one of the most important centers of Bodo Brahma Dharma. Babaji propagated the idea and principle Brahma Dharma through the Jyoti Ashram.

8. Jyoti Ashram of Roumari has become a nerve centre of Bodo Brahma religion. The Ashram runs a Boarding School within Ashram premises with a view to propagate Brahma religious ideas and values along with the general education. After the death of Phwrlang Babaji Shri Yogendra Basumatary succeeded the Ashram and still running it.

9. Though a large number of Bodos still practice their traditional religion Bothouism but they cannot denied the influence of Brahma religion. The effect of Brahma religion on Bathou religion became more visible often the propagation of Mani Bathou Siva Dharma by Rupamani Devi of Basugaon in 1993. Mani Bathou came into existence as a conflation of the cumulative ideals of Bathou and Brahma cults along with the some elements of Hinduism. This newly emerge cult brought a major modification of the conception and practices of the traditional Bathou religion. Mani Bathou is also called Mani Bathou Siva Dharma, Siva Dharma also not worship any idol or symbol of Lord Siva, but consider Sijou Plant as sacred symbol of Lord Siva.

10. Another cult of Bathouism is Bathou Aroj initiated by Dr. Mangalsingh Hazowary of Kokrajhar district. He is retired principle of Kokrajhar Government B. Ed College. He influenced by Brahma Dharma and tried to modify Bathouism. He also tried to introduce some refine worship pattern and banded animal sacrifice in the name of rituals. It gives more importance on mercy and love of god, wisdom and goodness, singing devotional songs, accompanied by traditional musical instruments etc. are in order to get blessing of God.

11. Those that neither follow Mani Bathou nor Batho Aroj but practices traditional Bathouism also came Unser the influence of Brahma Dharma. Those who still followed Bathouism are not practices traditional age old religious rituals. Though in studied villages nine tenth respondents are the follower of Brahma religion and rest are not following Bathouism in its original form

12 The data displayed that among the Bathou followers 48.97% adopted fire oblation as a part of their ritual, 21.85% adopt offering flower as a part of their ritual and 8.16% are still followed traditional rituals this animals and birds sacrifices..

The finding indicate that Kalicharan's idea, work, philosophy duchesses almost every section of Bodo society.

This finding indicated that lots of reformation occurs in Bodo society. Large number of Bodos adopted Brahma religion instead of Christianity or Islamism. Occupational mobility, Change in the pattern of political behaviour, social customs and practices, education etc. also started in Bodo society.

This situation proves all the three hypotheses- Kalicharan Brahma is the main architect of Bodo reformation and society, Brahma religion vis-à-vis Boroni Pandulipi initiated a new age for Bodo, *Bodo Maha Sanmilian* in early 20th century has major impact on Bodo social organization. It was Kalicharan Brahma who successfully campaign against social evils like illiteracy, forceful marriage etc. He established a number of schools and boarding's to popularize education among Bodos .He promoted, propagated ethical, rational social reform of Bodo society.

Major reformation of Bodo society occurs with the propagation of Brahma religion and bringing customary law in a written form by the name of Bodoni Pandulipi. The Pandulipi can be marked as the beginning of new age in the Bodo's cultural and social history, a common social code and conduct for the followers of Brahma religion. It was established for the Brahma flowers first but later entire Bodo society accepted it. It marked the beginning of an era of unity, integrity and brotherhood among the Bodo community and was a vital force that would strongly bind them together even in the future. Because Pandulipi implemented its code and conduct uniformly among the Bodos. It abolishes number of barbaric punishment system, social practices. Similarly Brahma religion also brings reformation in socio-cultural life of the people.

Again it is Bodo Maha Sanmilon of early 20th century plays significant roles in uniting Bodo intellectual as well as it give a vibrant platform to discuss and decide the matter related to the upliftment of Bodo society.

In summary, it can be said that traditional Bodo society was characterized by poverty, illiteracy, superstitious beliefs and practices but due to timely intervention saved the Bodo society from grave extinction. It was by Kalicharan's efforts religious conversions were checked, the identity of this community was rescued and revived as well as directed towards the path of progress by escorting in the much-needed reformation. The changes introduced by him are varied and wide ranging covering all aspects of life and living of the Bodo people. He extended his works ranging from spirituality to education, village welfare to the well being of women and farmers from empowering the students provided the Bodos with a new surname and compilation of the Boroni Pandulipi. Indeed, his contributions are of tremendous significance that it has changed the Bodo society. Since, it was his endeavour the destiny of his people took new turn, he can be considered as the main architect of the modern Bodo society.

It was Kalicharan Brahma's tireless effort that Bodo gradually kept moving towards progress and reformation. Their status in the society too, had seen some improvement and other communities began to treat them with less disregards and discrimination. More and more Bodos started to show an interest in education began to build solidarity among them and increasingly came to realize that in the past, they had not chosen the right education. The Bodoni Pandulipi that would become strengthens and accelerates this process. Besides binding the community together, it still continued with his mission, but it was not as frequently as it had been in the past.

Along with the propagation of the Brahma religion, Kalicharan Brahma launched campaign for social reforms even during the colonial rule over India. On the educational front Kalicharan urged the British Government for more schools in the Bodo dominated areas. He also pleaded for teaching the Bodo children in English medium and educated youth with employment opportunities. Kalicharan Brahma not only introduced the Brahma religion in the Bodo society and launched vigorous reformatory movements for spiritual and socio-economic upliftment of the Bodo society; he undertook extensive tours and organized the Bodo rural folks against the social evils. He was responsible for the establishment of many schools and encouraged the promotion sericulture and horticulture in order to ensure economic self reliance in the Bodo society. He also launched movements to prevent unrestricted use of liquor in the Bodo society. It was because of his tireless and selfless efforts that the Bodo people could come out of the household of literacy and socio-economic backwardness. Kalicharan Brahma felt the need of

preserving the unity and the true identity of the people and he considered this could be achieved only through removing socio-economic and religious evils. Since, it was his endeavourer the density of his people took new turn, he can be considered as the main architect of the modern Bodo society.