



Reflection Of Bodo Traditional Culture In Jwhwlao Nileswar Brahma's Song "Wi Bibwnang Goday"

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Abstract:

Nileswar Brahma is the unsung hero of the Bodo community. He was popularly known as Jwhwlao Nileswr Brahma. He was a good personality and was a music composer, poet, social worker and one of the cultural organizers and movement leader in Bodo community. He was the first gramophone record Singer from Bodo community. His melodious songs in Bodo were first time recorded in the gramophone record company Columbia, Kolkata in 1952. He was an author of poetry and lyrics book "Balabganwi Boroni Khonthai" published in 1952. His songs depict the traditional culture of the Bodos. For example, they portray the enjoyment of the *Bwisagu* season, the joy of being together, the raising birds and pics, and the experience of being guest during the *Bwisagu* season, among other themes.

Key Words: *Bwisagu*, *Bibwnang*, Bodo culture, reflection, traditional.

1.0 Introduction:

Jwhwlao Nileswar Brahma was born on 11th February 1927 at *Goibari* village of Gossaigaon sub division under Kokrajhar district from Bodo family. His father's name was Dalaram Narzary and mother's name was Gwnwshri Narzary. Dalaram Brahma have nine children. Nileswar Brahma was the nineth child of

Dalaram and Gwnwshri. He had six elder brothers- Bahadurshing Brahma, Asarshing Brahma, Bisarshing Brahma, Dhanishing Brahma, Sameswar Brahma and Fulebar Brahma and two elder sisters - Fuleswari Brahma and Khwlwmswari Brahma. He was thoughtful since his childhood. Nileswar Brahma's father was a priest (*deori*) and mother was a priestess (*deodwni*).

Jwhwlao Nileswar Brahma was married to Pramila Muchahary on 2nd February 1968. He had six sons- Ranjay Brahma, Nilnayan Brahma, Sanjib Brahma, Dhanjit Brahma, Rajput Brahma and Samrat Brahma and two daughter Pratibha Brahma and Jilima Brahma.

Nileswar Brahma was a skilled player of the Bodo and other musical instrument, such as the *kham*, veena and flute. His formal education started in 1931 at the lower primary school in his native village, Dwikhorguri L.P. school, but he did not complete it. Two years later, he resumed his schooling at Kamalshing primary school, but once again, he did not finish his studies there. He then studied for two years at the Chatagram Amalgemated Academy. But Nileswar Brahma was unable to pass the matriculation examination.

Nileswar Brahma was a good singer and lyricist who is now known for his songs and writings. He began writing lyric as a hobby, he later became both a singer and lyricist. In 1950, Nileswar Brahma with support and inspiration from *Ansai Afad* went to Calcutta where he performed and broadcast his first song at All India Radio Kolkata centre. He made his public debut in 1951 on All India Radio Kolkata. Later he recorded his debut Bodo album from Columbia gramophone company limited, Calcutta in 1952. He was an author of poetry and lyrics book "*Balabganwi Boroni Khonthai*" published in 1952. Some of his other popular Bodo songs are-

1. *Bifangao Bananwi*
2. *Honwi sanjaha*
3. *Bibwnang Godai*
4. *Dina thandwng halw dwilw*
5. *Udang bwthwr*
6. *Mwnhang mwnghangwinw mwnnw thanga*
7. *Swrjigiri*
8. *Dukhu mwnnw ayo mwdwi fwiyw. etc.*

1.2 Aim of objective:

- a. An attempt to find out about the Jwhwlao Nileswar Brahma.
- b. The Song “*Wi Bibwnang Godai*” is an attempt to understand and reflect the traditional culture of the emerging Bodo.

1.3 Methodology:

Research methodology refers to the systematic, theoretical analysis of the methods applied to a field of study. Therefore, this article is mainly written by gathering information from the primary source and secondary sources. The research paper is written systematically by researching the Jwhwlao Nileswar Brahma as the main source and gathering details of his songs, interviews, and secondary data information from sources such as books and magazines.

2.0 Discussion:

The song of “*Awi Bibwnang Godai*” is composed and sung by Jwhwlao Nileswar Brahma. It was published in the book “*Balabganwi Boroni Khonthai Methai*” in 1952. This song is sung to celebrate the season of *Bwisagu* and have fun with sisters-in-law.

The *Bwisagu* is the popular seasonal festival of the Bodos. The Bodos call this popular festival as “*Bwisagu*”, which means the start of the new year, many critics and authors has given different view on the word *Bwisagu*. *Bwisagu* is Bodo word, which originated from the word “*bwisw*” that means year or age and “*agu*” that means starting or start. The *Bwisagu* festival is observed in the beginning days of the first month of the Assamese year. Despite the fact that the farmers are tired with their agricultural related work, the *Bwisagu* season is celebrated with enthusiasm. Everyone enjoys it together by worshipping the almighty. The younger ones seek the blessings of the elders. In return, the elders shower love to the younger ones. Young girls and boys dance together to create the traditional image of the Bodo. The *Bwisagu* is the favourite festival of the Bodos. Dance and music become regular features of the Bodo community during the time of *Bwisagu*. The young men play *sifung* (flute), the *kham* (drum), *serja* a string instrument and beat out rhythms with a piece of split bamboo called *thorkha*. Girl’s dance with their clapping hands and play the *gongona* and small *jotha* (cymbal). The young boys and girls sing songs of love, joy etc. There are various songs of love during the time of *Bwisagu* that are very popular among the Bodo youths. This particular song depicts a dance performance during the festive season of *Bwisagu*, where the brother-in-law asks their sister-in-law to sing and dance. Which says: -

Awi bibunang Godai agwi

Mwnbari bibari

Fwi mwsani sonafwr

Boibw sari sari.¹

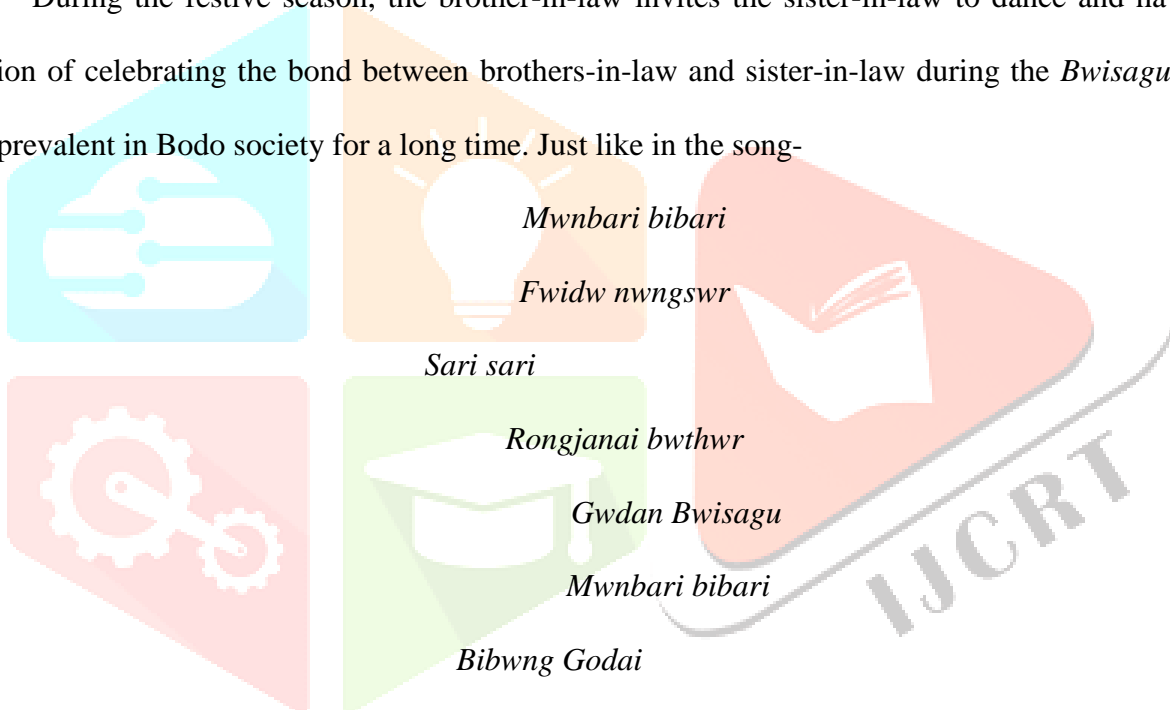
In English-

Oh Bibari Manbari

My dear sisters-in-law,

Comes let us dance in a row,²

During the festive season, the brother-in-law invites the sister-in-law to dance and have fun. The tradition of celebrating the bond between brothers-in-law and sister-in-law during the *Bwisagu* season has been prevalent in Bodo society for a long time. Just like in the song-



¹ Narzary, Dhaneswar: *Jwhwlaao Nileswar brahma*, p22

² Brahma, Mohini Mohan: Folk Song of the Bodos, p178

³ Ibid.p22

In English-

come dear *Bibari Mwnbari*'

Let us dance in rows.

There is joy of the new year.

Sister-in-law *Bibari Mwnbari*

Come dear let us dance in a row.⁴

The ancestors of Bodo people are were to go for hunting and eating together since ancient times. Gatherings for festivals, such as carnivals, were made possible through hunting and the use of material cultures that created their own food sources. Additionally, Bodo woman rear birds at livestock to support their families within the Bodo household. During festivals like *Bwisagu*, guests participate in worship by sacrificing the family bird. These by traditional motifs are reflected in his song. Such as-



In English -

I will not shoot down

Either the pea-cock or deer

But shall kill instead your own hen

⁴ Brahma, Mohini Mohan: Folk Song of the Bodos, p178

⁵ Narzary, Dhaneswar: *Jwhwlaao Nileswar brahma*, p22

The Bodo people have a long-standing tradition of inviting young men to celebrate together in the language of love. In his song, the brother-in-law lovingly invites his sister-in-law to celebrate the festive season. For example –

Aio angni sona

Mwnbari bibari

Fwidw nwngswrbw sari sari

Rongjanai bwthwr

*Gwdan Bwisagu.*⁶

In English –

oh, my dear *Bibari Mwnbari*

Come let us dance in row

There is joy of the new year Bwisagu.

Apart from breeding birds in the Bodo house, piggery is also a traditional practice of the Bodos. Bodo women use different method of earning a decent income in various ways in the interest of managing their families well. The traditional way of raising pigs is expressed in the song in which brother-in-law invites sister-in-law to dance, sing and celebrate to the tune of “let’s slaughter pigs” during the *Bwisagu* festival season. E.g.-

Mwnbari bibari

Bibwnang godai

Nwngswni omakhow

Hugu-gu hwnjase

*Gaonswi ang.*⁷

⁶ Narzary, Dhaneswar: *Jwhwlaio Nileswar brahma*, p22

⁷ *Ibid.*p22

In English -

sisters-in-law *Bibari Manbari*

I shall take in neither you nor her

But shall carry your pig instead.

3.0 Conclusion:

The song of Jwhlwao Nileswar Brahma discussed above clearly reflects the Bodos enjoying traditional *Bwisagu* festival, managing their households, raising animals and managing their household in the workplace. The Bodos celebrate the festival of *Bwisagu* with joy. The elders celebrate *Bwisagu* festival together with love the younger, respect for the elder and with joy in the worship of God. During the festival season, all the guests come together to celebrate *Bwisagu*. It is through this joy that the bond of unity lives on. The traditional image of the Bodo culture is reflected in this song like other song of the *Bwisagu* festival.

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