

The role of Orunodoi magazine in the upliftment of Assamese literature

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Abstract

The role of magazines in the development of modern Assamese language-literature is immeasurable. The custom of Assamese magazine which evolved in the 19th c has crossed its circling of one hundred fifty years to reach its present state. In making this custom achieve its present state numerous contributions has been done by various newspapers and magazines. In this case the role of *Orunodoi* magazine is worth mentioning. Published in the year 1848 by the missionaries from Sivasagar the *Orunodoi* magazine is the first Assamese literary magazine. By presenting discussions and news on a variety of subjects ranging from literature, history, science etc., the magazine attempts at enriching the Assamese people about the western culture as well. Along with awakening the Assamese people about their own language – literature and by broadening the intellectual and mental horizon, the *Orunodoi* magazine plays a crucial role in the spreading of current and self-knowledge as well as self-confidence. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the role of *Orunodoi* magazine in creation of the foundation of Assamese literature and its role in the growth and spread of the society, language and literature in various directions.

Keywords: Orunodoi, Missionaries, Modern Assamese literature, Magazine, language-literature.

1.0 Preface

1.1 Introduction to the Subject

The era division origin of Assamese literature is worth discussing. In these terms the name of *Orunodoi* magazine in creating a new era in the field of Assamese literature is worth mentioning. “*Orunodoi* is not a magazine but an era.”¹ It has played an important role not only in building the foundation of Assamese language-literature but also in creating literature by encouraging and motivating the writers also equally in culture, dance, science, social science, religion etc. and in various other directions *Orunodoi* has paved the way. “*Orunodoi* is famous in our national life not only as a magazine, but its contribution in Assamese language-literature-culture is worth remembering. In the previous eras Assamese

thought and consciousness's direction the gift of this paper magazine is great and to be forever remembered.”²

Published In the January month of the year 1846 from Sivasagar mission press *Oruodoi newsletter* is Assam's and Assamese language's 1st magazine. With due efforts of the Baptist missionaries of America that first entered Assam in the year 1836, the newsletter was first published under the guidance of the editor Dr. Nathan Brown. After Dr. Nathan Brown, under the editorship of S.M Whiting, DR. Miles Bronson, Mrs. Ward, Rev. Clerk and A. K. Gurney, *Orunodoi* contributed in strengthening the Assamese literary culture. Although till the year 1850 *Orunodoi* was published as a newspaper and magazine, in the year 1851 its status as a newspaper was withdrawn. “From the

¹ Basanta Kumar Goswami (sangrahaak and editor), *Orunodoi* 1855-1860, preface, p.0.10

² Chandra Prasad Saikia, *Orunodoi* (preface), p.0.5

year 1846 to 1880, a total of 34 years *Orunodoi* published itself under three names, namely 1846 to 1850 as *Ounodoi Newsletter*, from 1851 to 1860 as *Orunodoi* and from 1861 to 1880 as *Arunodoi*.³

The missionary protestant came into Assam in order to preach for Christianity. To strengthen Christianity as a strong religion was their main responsibility. However instead of stressing on the religious teachings as their ultimate agenda they paid attention to spreading of knowledge in Assam as well. Published in 1818, the paper titled *Samachar Darpan* of the British Baptist had a major influence on the then Assam. Under the admiration of this paper, the missionaries proposed the idea that the monthly issues of *Orunodoi* to be published shall be dealing with the matters of religion, science and general knowledge and other subject matters. Although the missionaries kept working keeping in concern the social customs and Assamese national sentiments since the very beginning, but due to the time-to-time targeted attention paid towards promoting Christianity in the sections discussing science and knowledge, it can be seen that a section of people started forming negative opinions towards *Orunodoi*. However, focusing particularly on education and by creating awareness amongst the youth *Orunodoi Newsletter* has not only uplifted the Assamese folks but also contributed in helping Assamese people form their own point of view and opinion. Indian history being not its only concern the magazine also focused on European and American science, history, literature, society and the rest were also published in *Orunodoi*. The spreading of education in Assam and the conflict of the western cultural tradition for protectiveness and progressiveness, in this context the names of Miles Bronson, Oliver T Cutter and Nathan Brown are worth mentioning. The missionaries by promoting education and introducing scientific thoughts in the Assamese societal mindset tried to get rid of the prevailing ills of the society. For that reason, news from other parts of the world were often published in the magazine. By introducing modernity in the

Assamese society and culture, *Orunodoi* magazine had created a new era. In Assamese literary history this era is called as THE ARUNODOI ERA. In the year 1880 *Orunodoi* was stopped from publishing. Not only for creating an era but also for clearing the route to the next era the contribution made by *Orunodoi* is worth seeking for.

1.2 Aims and purpose of study

1. To discuss the role played by *Orunodoi* in establishing as well as modernizing the Assamese language and literature.
2. To discuss the role played by *Orunodoi* in the Assamese language is the motive of this paper.
3. To analyze the role of *Orunodoi* in the growth of Assamese literature through the assimilation of a new way of literary appearance, resource and notion.

1.3 Method and source of Study

The magazine newsletter has been historic, explanatory and descriptive for study purposes. For studious purposes the *Orunodoi* magazine has been considered as the origin or secondary source for various story books, magazines, literary writing.

1.4 Study's limitation

In this paper the literary grant forwarded by *Orunodoi* magazine towards the Assamese language and literature has been discussed. In relation to how and in which direction the *Orunodoi* magazine played a crucial role in guiding the development of Assamese language and literature has also been discussed.

2.0 Main discussion

2.1 The role of *Orunodoi* magazine in the development of Assamese societal life.

2.1.1 Society's cultural enlightenment

³ Nagen Saikia, "Orunodoi'r oitihashik gurutto", Mihir Deuri (edi.), *Prakash*, p.6

From the very beginning *Orunodoi* has been playing a crucial role towards the upliftment of the society by providing various essays against the ills and superstitions of the society. It can be seen that *Orunodoi* has been enlightening the people about the harmful effects of all toxic consumption-

"*Orunodoi* has been enlightening the people of Assam regarding the ill effects of opium consumption and during the time when people's facial expression turned pale upon hearing the rule of the Burmese, at that time it was declared that opium was more of an enemy than **Burmese**."⁴ In the literary writing titled '*England's Definition*' (*Englandor Biboron*) published in the 1847 April issue, Anandaram Dhekial Phukan disregarded prostitutes, drugs, alcohol as the ills of the society. Knowledge on the ills that had spread during that period of the society is accessible through an article in the 1853 July published issue written by an Assamese person titled *Asom Dekhor lokhokolor proti dutiyo nibedon potrot*- "alcohol consumption, prostitution, trap making, and rumors of which the people of Assam had never even heard of before, all these activities have become strong now. Shame shame. Falling in companionship with these sinuous people the innocent people of our land have also started committing sins." On the other hand, in the literary writing *Fotikar biboron* (June 1846) along with mentioning the name of the liquor and after discussing on the ill effects of it, lastly a request has been made to quit its consumption as well. Towards the end of the literary piece a criticism on liquor can also be seen-

"Offering everyone a namaskar

Opium and drugs are our country's heavy weight

Consuming these our countrymen have gone to waste

Sadness prevails, no happiness and there's **foolishness**."⁵

Maur kalot bura dangoriyar mahatmar biboron (May, 1847) likewise many other literary

writings dealing with superstitions were published in *Orunodoi*. The superstitious beliefs that the Assamese had on burhadangoria during the haija (cholera) epidemic has been described in the magazine.

During the period of 19th c Assamese society, the efforts put forwarded by the missionaries in removing the ills and superstitions of the society was also supported by personalities like Hemchandra Baruah, Gunabhiram Baruah and others. While getting his higher studies in Kolkata Gunabhiram Baruah came into contact with Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Ram Mohan Rai. Coming in support of the widow remarriage movement which was started by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Gunabhiram Baruah after the death of his first wife, he himself married a widow and forwarded his stance in favor of the movement. A year after his death, his widowed daughter Swarnalata's second marriage was also performed. Literary writings coming in support of the widow remarriage like *Ramanabmi Natak* along with *Bidhobar Bibah* (January, 1854), *Dujoni Bidhoba Sowali Bibah Howar Kotha* stories etc. were published in *Orunodoi*. The Assamese societal- cultural atonement was the main aim of Hem Chandra Baruah's life. He not only preached about the principles but also applied them to his own life. In support of the widow remarriage movement started by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, he protested against the norms that refused to let the widows remarry by refusing to enter into a second marriage himself. Presenting his argument towards man's second marriage he opined that in a society where women are denied the right to enter into a second marriage in that society there's no valid point in a man marrying a second time.

The only purpose behind Hem Chandra Baruah's literary productions was the Assamese society. Keeping in mind the purpose of rescuing the Assamese society from the grip of poisonous opium consumption he wrote the drama *Kaniyar Kirtan* (1861). In this drama by presenting the ill effects that opium causes on the society he criticized the Assamese unemployment, attitude,

⁴ Maheswar Neog (edi.), *Orunodoi* (preface), p.101

⁵ 'Fotikar biboran', Maheswar Neog (edi.), *Orunodoi*, p.46

arrogance and superstitions. In the first issue of the year 1846 January month an article titled *Kanir Biboran* got published. In the very beginning of the piece a poem on the ill effects of opium can be found. The beginning lines of the poems are:

“A very condemning thing is opium

One who consumes it is a fool.

Collected items are at loss

The mouth speaks a lot of foul words.”⁶

At the end of the *Kaniyar Kirtan* drama can be found a poem. The essence of both the poems are similar: ‘Opium is like a poison. The one who consume opium is foolish. Shame shame. What grave destruction. Opium has destroyed the Assam state’. There is a lot of similarities in these above lines and the thoughts and message published in the *Kaniyar Kirtan*.

Hem Chandra Baruah’s *Bahire rong song bhitore kuwabhatu* (1876) presents a strong satirical outlook on the Assamese society’s attitude, hypocrisy and tolerance. In this book Assamese with the help of some characters like religious arrogance and cunningness the destruction of the Assamese societal life has been laid bare. Right from the rights of the satra to the priest and brahmans and indeed the so-called leaders none has been spared from his critical attacks.

In this way the role taken by *Orunodoi* in the Assamese the societal culture is worth mentioning.

2.1.2 Women education’s trend and publicity

In introducing women's education in Assam *Orunodoi* paper played a major part. Paying importance on women's education, the missionaries established schools in Sivasagar, Nagaon and Guwahati in order to educate the girl child. Maheswar Neog mentions the importance paid on the women's education by the writers of

the time of *Orunodoi* as another of its special feature. In the issue dated 1861 May written under the pen name Haw.shaw on the topic *women's education* cites that “Assamese people do not impart knowledge to their girl child, the way a boy's mind is worthy of receiving knowledge in a similar manner a girl child is also worthy, therefore giving knowledge to both of them is more profitable.”⁷ In the issue dated 1853 June titled *Kheh Aru Asom Dekhor Schoolor Kotha* it was written, “In the most developed countries in the world almost all men and women are literate, but in our country numerous people have spent their lifetime in illiteracy.” In the 1853 July and October issue, essays relating to women's education were also published. In these essays along with the importance given on women's education and women's viewpoint; the dominance of women writers in the genre of novel of the early modern Assamese literary productions can be seen. In this field Padmanath Gohain Baruah's *Bhanumati*, *Lahoi*; Bezbaruah's *Padum Kuwari*; Rajnikanta Bordoloi's *Miri Jiyori*, *Manomoti*, *Rangili*, *Radha- Rukminir Ron*, *Rahdoi Ligiri* etc. novels are forever worth mentioning.⁸

Post 16th c poet Padmapriya Aai, till the middle of the 19th c, and infect before the birth of *Orunodoi* none of the women writer's name can be found in Assamese literature. It was in *Orunodoi* that the first Assamese story written by a woman was published. Padmavati devi Phukanani's *Stree Hokolor Kortoibya Karmo* and Vishnupriya Devi's *Bhargya Swamir Kortoibya Karam* are other literary pieces published in *Orunodoi*. These two writers along with literary writings also composed children's centric books as well. Padmavati devi Phukanani's *Hitshadhika* and Vishnupriya Devi's *Nitikotha* were the first two pieces written in the genre of children's literature. Padmavati devi Phukanani contributed in other discussional topics of the next issues of *Orunodoi* as well.

⁶ ‘Kanir biboran’, Maheswar Neog (edi.), *Orunodoi*, p.6

⁷ Maheswar Neog, (edi.), *Orunodoi*, preface, p.103

⁸ Aananda Barmudoi, ‘Asomiya samaj aru bhasa sahityar Uttoranot Orunodoir bhumika’, Mihir Deuri (edi.), *Prakash*, p.20

2.2 Role of *Orunodoi* in the development of Assamese language

2.2.1 Linguistic Nationalism and awareness towards mother tongue

The linguistic consciousness brought by the missionaries in the Assamese people also brought about the national linguistic consciousness. In this concern the role played by *Orunodoi* is noteworthy. *Orunodoi* not only brought about the linguistic consciousness but also started the discussion on modern knowledge. This magazine for the first time by creating an awareness in the minds of the Assamese people for their mother tongue, also led to the budding of the linguistic nationalism. During that period *Orunodoi* first vouched for the use of Assamese language instead of Bengali in the schools, colleges, court and offices as well. While praising on the contribution of the missionaries and *Orunodoi* in once again establishing the Assamese language, Maheswar Neog writes “Amongst the 19th c middle Assam's Baptist mission society and *Orunodoi*'s various effort's results was the most important ...to bring out the order to establish the Assamese language to its former glory in the forty decades of elected British governments rule from Calcutta to the schools and offices of Assam.” He again mentions that despite having a negative outlook towards the British company's governance, the Padres who established the schools and started the Assamese teachings, for those schools they not only introduced primary books in Assamese but also published the *Orunodoi Newsletter Magazine* in the Assamese language. In the issue of March 1857 an anonymous writer voiced his opinion against the educated Assamese individual's disregard towards their mother tongue and strongly discussed that such mentality should not be entertained. However, to many an individual the publishing of this relatable letter worked as the ground for the rise of many linguistic protests. In this way the role played by *Orunodoi* in returning the feelings of self-trust and self-faith in the Assamese people is considerable.

⁹ Maheswar Neog, *Orunodoi*, Chandra Prasad Saikia (edi.), *Asomiya Batori kakat alochanir dersho basaria etihās*, p.53

2.3 Role of *Orunodoi* in development of Assamese literature

2.3.1 Criticism is literatures growth

When it comes to Assamese critical literary growth *Orunodoi* has contributed from the very beginning. If book publishing news, book's short description, introduction or impression are considered to be the ritualistic ground of Assamese literary criticism then the discussion done in Anandaram Dhekial Phookan's *Axomiya Lorar Mitra*'s second and third part published in the issue of the year 1849 October of *Orunodoi* can be said to be the beginning of Assamese literary criticism. This discussion in important from various directions. Unlike being published in the Assamese paper-magazine, the discussant has not just made a news presentation but he in addition manages to present a grave discussion on the reason behind writing the book, why the writer has kept himself anonymous, under what circumstances the book *The Friend of Young Asam* was translated into Assamese, and what was the immediate and far extensive effect of it. Further in order to help the readers of *Orunodoi* to understand the subject matter of the book a portion of *Axomiya Lorar Mitra* has been cited.

Dr. Maheswar Neog has stated that-

“Young Sjt. Babu Anandiram Phukan accomplished *Englandor Biboron (England's description)* April, 1847, In the way knowledge and aesthetics' expression in the earlier stories were beautiful, beautiful were the *Axomiya Lorar Mitra* stories he wrote for children.... October 1849 a literary notice on Phukan's book was brought out and the from book's second part *Vidya Hikiboloi Uddgua Kotha* titled literary written was published along with it...*Axomiya Lorar Mitra*, Bangla *Sitrabilashini Puthi*, *Ghosa Puthi*, *Baremotora Pokhila Kitap*, *Kaniyar Kirtan* etc. The subject matter written on these, it may not be right when said to be the beginning of modern literary criticism.”⁹

In the 1854 December issue of *Orunodoi*, centering on the *life facts* of renowned poet

Kalidas a highly critical essay was published. Given that at the end of the essay the writer's name was signed as only the letter G, it can be assumed that the writer was Gunabhiram Baruah. The discussant in his essay has also studied on the knowledge of epics, a poet's personal popularity, chapter-problem study, cultures aesthetic role related concern, worth enquiry etc.

"December 1854 issued renowned poet Kalidas' *life facts* (Neog, 1260-34). The writer's name is only given as G and perhaps this G is Gunabhiram. It's great thing that instead of life, the literary discussion is abundant...this discussion on Kalidas' poem truly can be said to be the one of many and the first literary critical impression on Assamese *essay*."¹⁰

On Kalidas' *Abhigyanam Shakuntalam* the discussant writes: 'its end and beginning everything is beautiful'. The critic has connected the western poetry with the Indian *Natyashastra*. Based on speech and entertainment, the events and activities enable the drama to reach its conclusion in a systematic manner. That *Shakuntala* being a great drama, its translations getting translated make its readers happy, to confirm that he writes:

"Sir Gate of Germany after reading the interpretation of the interpretation of the drama Sakuntala done by Sir William James praised it a lot; therefore, will not the ones who read the main text do the *same*?"¹¹

In this manner discussions on literary-criticism is aimed for in *Orunodoi*.

2.3.2 The construction of modern stories in Assamese language.

The role of *Orunodoi* in constructing the modern stories in Assamese language is noteworthy. These stories mainly formed itself based on the oral and manuscript stories of upper Assam. The process of spelling for the missionaries in *Orunodoi* was pronunciation based. The way in

which the spellings in English, Bengali, Hindi are pronunciation based, in a similar manner for spelling Assamese too, the missionaries relied on the method of pronunciation. Even if the Assamese language similar to those languages is culturally valuable, the Assamese people's pronunciation unlike those languages does not follow the science of the sound. However, their expression of feelings and sentence formation custom was influenced by that of the English language. As a result, the use of connected Avyay, compound words and use of modern punctuation marks trended.

With an aim to make it a homely language, even if they changed 'ice' to 'waterstone'; 'storm' to 'strong winds', 'grapes' to 'climbers', these sorts of words later became obsolete. However, in the stories of the missionaries specially by the use connected Avyay, punctuation and compound words a new phase was given to the Assamese language. "It is evident that under the influence of the English sentence formation customs these stories were separated from the traditions of manuscript stories and earlier oral stories. In the writings of Anandaram Dhekial Phookan these sort of specialty in Assameseness can be seen for the *first time*."¹²

Even if the missionaries adapted to the alphabets-bindings of the dictionary written by Jamudaram Deka after receiving it through General Jenkins, Dhekial Phookan instead used the tatsam and tadvab of the Assamese linguistic. In this matter this section of the letter-binding received its completion in the hands of Hem Chandra Baruah. But in terms of sentence formation and publication, the stories of the missionaries serve as the source and foundation of modern Assamese *stories*.¹³ In the meantime, Hem Chandra Baruah even before the change of the missionaries spelling method, tried trending the culturally followed written Assamese language spelling method. For that purpose, even if he tried compiling the dictionary *Hemkosh*, it was after

¹⁰ Kabin Phukan, 'Jonaki-purbak ouponibesik asomat bhasa-sagyanata aru sahitya samalochana', Jayanta Kumar Bora (edi.), *Asomiya Sahitya Samalochanar Goti-Prakiti*, p.67

¹¹ Aananda Barmudoi, *Asomiya Sahitya Samalochanr Chamu Buranji*, p.12

¹² Nagen Saikia, op.cit. Prakash, p.8

¹³ Ibid,p.8

his death with the help of Hem Chandra Goswami and Gordon Sahab in the year 1900 it was printed for the first time.

2.3.3. The use and progress of Media

Orunodoi being the foundation of Assamese Newspaper, introduced the Assamese society to the outer dynamic world. The first issue of the first year came in 1846 and with the title *Jua Bosoror Kotha*. This installment talked about wide variety of topics from regions both national and international, like Gaya, Patna, Punjab, Kolkata, England, America, Myanmar, Swiss, Scotland, Germany, Madagascar, Denmark, Ireland, New Zealand, Kabul, Russia, Iceland, Algeria, Dacca Kolkata, Tahiti Island, Mexico etc. With every news from beyond the boundaries helped the Assamese people to build a new exposure towards the unknown. The incident from Dikhow river where a woman was killed by a crocodile (March, 1846); the robbery from the treasure of Purandar Singh (August, 1846); death of Purandar Singh (October, 1848); the markets installed by Maniram Dewan (January, 1858); shipwreck; death of bullocks due to thunderbolt (April, 1858); killing of Assamese travelers by Naga in Dhadorahi, how they carried the heads of the victims and how the convicts were later caught and set for trial, were some of the stimulating topics that were found in the pages of *Orunodoi*.

As it was a source of knowledge from round the world, it did not fail to provide information about animals and birds. It published an essay which focused on the flora and fauna of Assam, India and also of other countries of the world. It catered with all the necessary scientific information required to understand the wild world. The anthropological identity of people from different places, their cultural whereabouts including the cremation ceremony were gathered and published here. Apart from the aforementioned topics, the newspaper made an attempt to narrate the travel experiences of many people which indeed enabled the readers to travel the world by sitting right at their home. It also made sure to let

readers write back to them and know about the paper in form of reviews.

2.3.4. Antiquarian

Orunodoi issued the historical books in order to make the natives aware of their history and cultural background. Being an Assamese newspaper, it undoubtedly focused on the publication of Assam history. In the first issue of the paper, it included a chapter with the title *Rojar Moidam Khana*. This piece enabled the readers to see the writer's interest and cultural knowledge of the Assam history. It explains how the moidam (tomb) of the king was robbed in order to find valuables and this robbing of the tomb represents robbing of one's own cultural heritage. This act is unethical and to explain this, he gave a reference to the Egyptian Pyramid, saying "The Egyptian tombs are of three thousand years old, yet they stand still as well as intact in their **own place**."¹⁴

Ahom history is a valuable treasure of the Assamese culture. The editors and others associated with *Orunodoi* collected many historical texts from that era. From August, 1850 to August, 1852, *Orunodoi* Published *Assam history* in series. These series tried to concentrate and explain the untold stories from the past as well as gave logical reasoning on the part of the readers. In the first issue of August, it is mentioned, "But most of the citizens while writing their history, in order to glorify their kings often referred them to be descendants of God. As for example, Sikandar, the King of Greece was considered as son of Jupiter, the father of all the Gods; Romulus, the first King of Rome was considered to be the son of Mars or Kartik; Biswa Singha, the Kamrupi King was considered to be the son of **Lord Shiva**."¹⁵

Orunodoi tried to publish Assam history along with those history that could be linked with literature. The piece *Axom Dekh Xotru Akromon Kora* of 1951, September gives details about the Moamoria Rebellion and Burmese Invasion and based on this work, many literary fictional works were published, for example – *Lahori*,

¹⁴ 'Rajar Moidamkhana,' Maheswar Neog, (edi.), *Orunodoi*, p.6

¹⁵ 'Purani Asom Buranji', Maheswar Neog, (edi.) *Orunodoi*, p.59

Bhanumoti is another such story that gives glimpse of Moamoria Rebellion, although indirectly. *Bhanumoti*, the protagonist can be seen taking part in the rebellion while being hidden and also contributed with suggestions for the events organized by the rebels. Ranjan Kanta Bordoloi's most of the novels encompassed the Burmese Invasion as its backgrounds and *Manomoti* is one such example. Apart from it, *Kamrupar Buranji*, *Hindustani Buranji*, *Chutia Rojar Bonxawoli* (December 1850) and some documentaries helped to identify the readers, their own identity and history. All these attempts of *Orunodoi* assured to bring the love and nationhood among the people of Assam.

2.3.5 Secular Ideology

Although *Orunodoi* primary advocated for one particular religion, yet it was a paper that developed interest in other religious and cultural thoughts. Initially, the Missionaries tried to publish Christian ideas but later, it was seen that the paper took up other religious as well as non-religious topics to publish about, for example- *The Tirtho Yatra*, *Sorok Puja*, *Roth Jatra*, *The Tirtho aru Puranor Utpotir Koth*, *Hindu Dhormor Biboron*, *Hindu Lorar Uttom Uttor* etc. Apart from these, scientific education and its publicity were prioritized by *Orunodoi*. Works were published where proper scientific explanations were given for readers to know the actual reasons behind the eclipses and the Earth being round, not flat etc.

2.3.6. Evolution of Literature in Different Phases

The themes and topics put forward by *Orunodoi* are considered to be the stepping stones for the upcoming wave of the Assamese literary phase. The paper tried to encompass genres like - comic, novels, Western modern dramas, children literature, autobiographies, travelogue, modern poetry as well as debates. Apart from it, Assamese dictionary, Assamese grammar, idioms and phrases and academic books were also published that helped it grow in its domain. Originally, *Orunodoi* was introduced for preaching Christianity and so the paper produced stories that were of Christian origin with characters from everyday life and this initiated

the realistic writing in Assamese literature. It is in the pages of *Orunodoi*, where translation literature first got to see the light of the day. Bible along with other religious books as well as fables were translated into Assamese. Novels like John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* was translated into *Jatrikor Jatra* and published in series since 1851. Mohammad and Luther's biography, Dr. Franklin's biography and other literary works were published by *Orunodoi*.

The modern thoughts and opinions of Ananda Ram Dhekial Phukan, Gunabhi Ram Baruah and Hemchandra Baruah were popularized through the pages of *Orunodoi*. During that time, Ananda Ram Dhekial Phukan and Gunabhi Ram Baruah were taking English classes in Kolkata and on the other hand, Hemchandra Baruah secretly learnt English at home in order to practice the new scientific outlook that *Orunodoi* tried to bring forward. *Englandor Biboron* (1847), academic book *Axomia Lorar Mitro* (1849), *A Few Remarks on the Assamese Language and on Vernacular Education in Assam* (1858) etc. are some of the worth-mentioning works of Ananda Ram Dhekial Phukan. On the other hand, Gunabhi Ram Baruah used "Kolkata t Thaka Ajon Asomia Lok" as his pseudonym to write about the status of Assam along with its education, culture, language etc. as topic for the six letters he sent to the editor. Eventually, *Engrazi Bidya JonarFol*, *Osomia Bhasa*, *Bidhoba Bibah*, *England Aru Axom*, *Matribhakhar Xokti* etc. are some of the works that are to be mentioned if one discusses about the development of the Assamese language. The play *Ramnavami Natak* written by Gunabhi Ram Baruah in 1858, is a play published in *Orunodoi* which was in support of widow remarriage. This play is believed to be the first play written in Assamese based on European tradition. With the same theme, he started writing another play, *Bibah Rohoisso*, though could not finish it.

Hemchandra Baruah took the pseudonym "Sri Sunar Sad" to write articles based on one's love for his or her motherland, to the editor of *Orunodoi*. Apart from it *Onek Biya Kora Ojugut*, *Bahire Rong Song Bhitore Kuwa Batori* (1876), *StreeXikha*, *Probondhonaru Kaniyar Kirtan* (1861) are some of Baruah's work to be marked.

He contributed for the upliftment of Assamese academic books by publishing *Adi Path*, *Path Mala* rosona, *Osomia Byakoron* (1860), *Hemkosh* (1900) and tried to bring a discipline and arrangement in Assamese studies. He further tried to rectify and replace the use of “au” and “wabo” through *Orunodoi*.

All the Christian as well as non - Christian writers mainly preferred and published poetry like *Kolikotar Biboron*, *Sopaxal r Biboron*, *Guwahati r Biboron*, etc. the missionaries primarily paid their attention towards songs and verses. An Assamese Christian writer, Nidhi Libai Farwel wrote travelogue as well as poetry. Influenced by *Orunodoi*, *Assam Bilaxini* (1871), *Axam Mihir* (1872), *Axam Darpon* (1878), *Goalpara r Hitxadhini* (1876), *Axam Bondhu* (1885), *Axam News* and *Mou* (1886) were some newspapers that came into being.

2.3.7. Collection of Old Books

One of the prime concerns of *Orunodoi* was to keep track and collect the classics. It was Nathan Brown who around 1840 and 1850, started to collect old books for the first-time whole living in Sivsagar. In 1925, Surya Kumar Bhuyan attempted to make a list of all the books preserved by Nathan Brown. Out of 18 books, a number of history books were present and two among them got published in *Orunodoi*. Other books are Ram Sorosotir *Manichandra Ghukh*, Sankardev r *Bhagawat*, *Ekados Skondoh*, Boidonath r Dwijr *Tulokhi-dut kabya*, Sri Dhar Swami's *Dipikare Xoite Bhagowot Puranor 5th and 6th Skondoh*, *Sorudoi*, Haridev Sharma's *Jyotish Songkhep*, Raghu Nanda's *Jyotish- Totto*, quotes of Chanakya in Assamese translation, *Kisu Nelekha Path*, Episodes on the history of the rule from Jaydhwaj Singha to Rudra Singha, *Kamrupi Buranji*, *Lakhmi Singha's Buranji* and *Deudhai Axomia Buranji*. In this this way, with the collect of old book, *Orunodoi* played a major role.

2.3.8 Sociological or Anthropological Study

Description of different tribal groups of Assam were put forward by *Orunodoi* and this paved the way for sociological study of the region. The issue of 1846 published *Bhotor Dekh r Biboron* t Bhot, Oka, Abor, Singpho, Dophola, khamti, Misimi, Naga etc. . Apart lqfrom this,

Naga r Biboron (June, 1848), *Khamti Biboron* (July, 1848), *Misimi Biboron* (July,1848), *Singphor Biboron* (August, 1848), *Okar Biboron* (February, 1849), *Abor, Bor Abor, Mir and Dophola Biboron* (November, 1848) etc. are some works that introduced the ethnic groups of Assam and this helped to understand and witness the binding of all these group to form a beautiful society.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1. Discussion

1. *Orunodoi* is the first Assamese newspaper that created a new era with its wide variety of publications. The wave that this paper brought can be claimed to be Literature of *Orunodoi*.

2. The re-establishment of the Assamese language can be credited to this newspaper. It set up new schools and academic texts which made the society independent to form their own opinions and also introduced to form a base for the new kind of traditions budding around that time. This act of *Orunodoi*, helped people to develop a sentiment and attention for their community and language.

3. The newspaper gave the missionaries a way to reach the Assamese commoners in order to encourage them to write religious books. These sacred books, directly or indirectly played an important role in contributing towards Assamese language.

4. The collection of books and publication of new ones helped to develop and improve the scientific ideas of the people of the simple-minded commoners.

5. It made sure to make the people aware of the various events occurring throughout the globe, the stories translated from the Bible, hymns, poetry, drama, autobiography, nature study, moral education, contemporary news, scientific inventions, economic studies, news from the world of music, studies of different tribal and ethnic cultures including their writing culture etc. were the topics that were introduced by *Orunodoi* to the people. This helped the Assamese literary society to move forward and witness the light of the day.

6. *Orunodoi* enabled the writers to get the ideas of national as well as international economy, politics, culture etc. and as a result a few conscious language and culture lovers were inspired and worked for the upliftment of Assamese literature. It is they who can be credited to replace the old age with the new tradition to move the Assamese society into a modern age.

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