

The Concept of Evolution of the Universe Described in Devotional Songs (*Mibu A: Bang*) of the Mising Community of Assam

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Abstract: All the communities of the world, large and small, have some belief in the creation of their own people and the world. Earth and its atmosphere are continuously altered. Such constant change has characterized Earth since its beginning some billion years ago. From the outset, heat and gravity shaped the evolution of the planet. These forces were gradually joined by the global effects of the emergence of life. The Mising community of Assam, previously known as the Miris forms a fragment of the greater Mongoloid horde occupying the hills and dales of north - eastern India and according to the linguistic research they falls under the category of Tibeto - Burman speakers of the great Sino - Tibetan groups (Chatterji, 1951). They are rich in folk culture. The Misings also have their own ideas about the creation of the universe. There is some literature on folk beliefs of the Mising community, but it is not enough. On the other hand, there has not literature that discussed on the concept of evolution of the earth and the life on it. This paper aims to focus on the concept of evolution among the Mising community of Assam.

Keywords: Nothingness, A: bang, Pédong, Malevolent gods, Benevolent gods

1. Introduction

Several tribes of Arunachal, such as the Padam, Minyong, Galo, Nishi, Bangni, Apatani, Tagin, etc. of Arunachal Pradesh are cognate group of the Misings. They migrated in the ancient times from Tibet to Arunachal, lived in Arunachal for long centuries before migrating to Assam along the courses of the Brahmaputra and its tributaries in the eastern region of the State in different batches and at different times since about a thousand years ago, or so. The Misings have settlements in the eleven eastern districts of Assam, with concentration of their population in the Dhemaji, Lakhimpur and Jorhat districts (Taid, 2005).

The devotional songs called Abang occupy a unique position in the life - stream of the Adis and Misings of both Arunachal Pradesh and Assam. A: bang is a verse of hymn of praise, worship to god or Goddess, prayer to God for help, protection and blessing. It may be historical appendix giving an account of the Adi and Mising community. It retains the fine flavor of its source. Not only are phenomenal designs and forms confirmed to the verses, but widely separated portions of the 'A: bang' woven into intricate and perfect pattern. In fact this traditional knowledge of narrating and or singing of the oral text which the Adis and Misings call A: bang in different styles of singing used to be transferred verbally down the generation.

The mystic period of creation, beginning since the creation and Evolution of the Earth, coming of microbes, procreations, insects, reptiles and the birth of spirits and Man and Man's ultimate establishment of supremacy on earth crossing over numerous hurdles posed by the evils as narrated in the sacred oral Text (*Mibu A: bang*) of the Misings of Assam.

According to the Mising cosmology (about creationism and deities) it has evolved from *Kéyum* to *Se: di* level from

Emptiness level to existence and conscious forms respectively. There is no creation process in the middle of it. And it is divided into thirteen stages.

About unfathomed period of the remotest past narrated in the A: bang -

"*Kéyum ka: mange ya: yang délo Kéyum sumbuné ya: yum dungai, Kéro tadmangé ya: yang délo Kéro tatingé ri: ring dungai.* (During the unseen (*Kéyum*) which was closed and hollow, during the unheard *Kéro* i. e was deep in silence.)

Another similar concept of the remotest past Some a: bang narrate even the beginning of this Universe. Padun (1998) stated that according to them in the beginning there was nothing but a state of Being or not being.

It says:

"*Mi kamangai, mimang kamangai*
Do: nyi kamangai, Po: lo kamangai
Ímmé kamangai, Assé kamangai
Se: di ba: bu bottébi édém ru: lentoné, "

Meaning: No man was there, nor was any matter there. Neither Sun nor Moon was there. There was no fire, nor water. But *Se: di babu*, the great lord created them all.

Besides, according to a: bangs prevalent amongst the Adis of Arunachal Pradesh the emergence of *Se: di* the creator is given as thus 'the emergence of *Se: di* according to them (Adis) followed a great vibration. The vacuum was then filled up with vibration. In course of time the vibration threw out '*Koi koyyang*' that is dirt out of which the Sun the Moon, the Earth and all objects of the cosmos evolved.

Moreover, this concept of creation of universe narrated in the a: bangs sound almost like the modern theories of creation of this earth and run parallel to the idea given in Rig

Veda. However, the science in the Vedas explained these concepts since millennia. The Rig Veda, written thousands of years ago, mentions Hiranyagarbha and the Brahmanda Visphotak which talks about a similar theory.

Some of the provoking description of the process of Creation includes stanzas written eloquently. Indeed the science written in the Vedas was as profound as it was poetic.

‘There was neither Aught nor Naught. . . Neither air nor sky
What covered all? Where rested all?

A void in wrath. . .

Who knows. . . from whence this vast creation arose?

No Gods had then been born

Who then can ever the truths disclose?

Whence sprang the world. Whether framed by hand divine
or no, Lord in heaven alone can tell If even, He can show. "

This *a: bang* then goes on to explain the concept of Creation:

“That alone, by its own power breathed without air. Besides
or beyond that one, there was nothing. Darkness was further
shrouded by darkness, which appeared to flow all around?
That one came to be, even from this emptiness. By the
power of its own intent within that one, appeared the first
seed of mind in which arose, an impulse of diffusion and
concentration power. ”

At this point, that arisen the manifested Universe from that
un - manifested one. Seers declared this fundamental
position from reasoned meditation in their minds.

“These rays of concentrated power spread on all sides in the
manifested mass slanting below as well as up and in the
sides everywhere. From these rays of power arose the seeds
of mind and they became greater. The power of the seeds of
mind remained concentrated in them, while the pressure of
concussion remained on the other side.”

Thus, it arisen the difference between the living and non -
living. The evolution of minds further took place. The
science in the Vedas, too, grew deeper.

“Nobody can describe the process of creation Gods cannot
describe the process of creation. Because, they also did not
see the process of creation, they came into existence only
after the visible world had happened.”

It is important to note that the Aryan society and the Adi -
Mising society, the development of their civilization were
not same, although, there are some similarities in the theory
of creation, there are huge differences between the religious
thought, practices, beliefs and traditions of the society. This
example is given only with some similarities in the theory of
creation (Doley, 1998).

THE ORDER OF EVOLUTIONARY PROCESSES:

The orders of evolutionary processes in Misings were -
Kéyum>Yumkang (*Dust Particles*) *>Ka: si - Siang* (*Dust
particles floated like flowing water, in the space*) *>Anbo/A:
bo* (*Fog like formation stage, in the space*) *>Bomug*
(*transformation into darker cloud like stage>Mukseng*

(Transformation into thick cloud stage, in the space *>Se: di -
Me: lo* (Transformation into condensed/Solid stage
(Formation of earth)).

The process of creation has started from *Se: di* and *Me: lo*.
Different gods and goddesses have been created from *Se: di*
and *Me: lo*. These gods and goddesses are the various forms
of the earthly world, the possessors of the water, the
possessors or the creators. From *Se: di* and *Me: lo* to
Díling> Lí: tung> Tu: ye> Yepé> Pédong. At this stage
various gods, demons, ghosts have been created.

Pédong is the mother of earthly people, insects, trees,
mother of mountains, etc. *Pédong* gave birth to the first
conscious animal. That's why Adi - Mising regarded *Pédong*
as the primordial mother of the human race. The genealogy
is calculated starting from the *Pédong*. There are significant
gods and goddesses created or born from *Pédong*. The
known off springs mentioned in *A: bang* and narrated by *Ka:
ling Borang* (2019) were - 1. *Pédong* - *Do: ban - Banji*
Banmang - the blood thirsty spirits were given *Banji Piri*
Mo: líng, 2. *Pédong* - *Do: mi Minur Lomang* - the higher
grade spirit of smithy who inherited the art from *Re: si - Re:
man*, was given the *Sedi Lakléng Mo: pék*, 3. *Pédong* - *Do:
bi Bisi Ya: da* - the second category spirit was given the
Losar of smithy *Pobé*, 4. *Pédong* - *Do: dang - Da: dibote* -
the benevolent God of domestic animals was given the *Dadi*
Jenang land, 5. *Pédong* *Do: ding - Di: mu - Ta: ya* - the
master of the costly medicinal plants and herbs was allotted
the roof of the world - *Di: né Tarpum Bi: dum*, 6. *Pédong* -
Do: mi - Misum - Miyang - the mistress of ornaments and
beads shared the *Sedi Lagbang Mo: pek* with *Minur -
Lomang*, 7. *Pédong* - *Do: mi - Miti - Mijo* - the mistress of
Fragrance settles at *Miti Beyig sicing*, *Mijo Odgyam Lé:
yang*, 8. *Pédong* - *Dongi - Ngí: té Po: ro* The spirit of child
sickness was allotted the *Ngí: té Kardang Da: sing*, 9.
Pédong - *Do: si - Sili - Sidong* - the deity of cloud and storm
was allotted *Siti Kitko*, 10. *Pédong* - *Dongi - Ngiji - ngi:
pong* - Deity of illness of pregnant women was given the
Ngiji - Sikit Kidbung, 11. *Pédong* - *Do: rot - Rodmang - Ma:
si - Sibe siyjin* the apes got *Mí: jeng Lo: ron Po: bé and Gí:
té pakpang jijang/rakrang*, 12 *Pédong* - *Do: bí - Bírí - bíag* -
the serpent (snake) master of the water got the deep
waters.13. *Pédong* - *Doro - Robo* - the master of the forest
got the inhabitable forest lands.14. *Pédong* - *Do: ni - Ni: bo* -
the man got no properties due to shortage of the same but
lived a nomads life on earth 15. *Pédong* - *Do: mi - Mili -
minam* - the spirit of epidemics and contagious diseases was
advised to live on others body due to the shortage of landed
property, 16. *Pédong* - *Do: pu - Puduk - Pusa* - the frogs. As
Pédong na: né (Mother) grew old, they were deprived of
milk and thus left to live on water, in the lake of *Do: né
Rodléng* (*Do: né Rodléng Siéng*).

Here we can compare the classification made by Prof
Nahendra Padun on creation -

*Kéyum>Yumkang>Ka: si>Sian/Siang>Anbo>
Bomug>Mukséng> Se: dí.*

From *Se: dí* (Female) and *Me: lo* (Male), they gave birth to
15 nos of *Agam Ui* (Benevolent Gods) viz.1. *Se: pí - Yogmo*
(Smith) 2. *Se: pang - Yogmo* (Smith) 3. *Dínom - Yogmo*
(creator of wild animal) 4. *Tunggi Ta: bé* (First Mibu/Priest

of the world) 5. Sengor - Orné (logos and light) 6. Ki: né Na: né (Mother earth) 7. Kongki: Ko: mang (Creator of life structure) 8. Do: ying Boté (Owner of heaven) 9. Yi: dum Boté (Husband of *Pédong* Ané) 10. Línngén Sobo (creator of metals and iron) 11. Déndé sobo (owner of cereals or food grains) 12. Línngén sobo (creator of Metal) 13. Kunggum - Kanggam sobo (Owner of plants) 14. Lí: tung - Lí: mang (Parents of the world). Again from Se: dí> Lí: tung (Lí: mang> Mangkar> Karpum+Karduk)>Tu: yé>Yepé>*Pédong*.

SE: DI ME: LO - PARENTS OF BENEVOLENT GODS (*Agam Uis*):

It has mentioned in the *A: bang* that all the benevolent Gods, Goddesses and deities were borne from *Se: di - Me: lo*. These are call as *Agam Ui* (Benevolent Gods). They are well - wishers and always save the living being, no harm from them. Some of the benevolent Gods and goddesses mentioned in the *a: bangs* were (Borang, 2019) –

Do: ying Boté - a man, spiritual guardian and who guide the human race. He is the father of knowledge and wisdom. He teaches man to fight against nature and against evil. He instilled knowledge in the human heart to fight against destruction and deception. He is spiritually well - wisher.

Yidum Boté - The god of wind. Another name is *Do: yi*: meaning strom. He miraculously or spiritually kept in touch with *Pédong* mother. He impregnates the foetus in the *Pédong* na: né womb. This is because of the fact that why *Pédong* na: né gave birth to thousands of good and bad spirit and animals etc.

Kongki Boté - The casting (manufacturing) of human body parts - Bishwakarma or Bidhata. As a sign of his craftsmanship, the human body is shaped like a particle, a hump, a tail. He is a skilled sculptor; but due to his inattention or neglect, human beings are sometimes crippled in birth.

Boki Moné - Goddess of dance, song, joy, festival. He dedicated the festival of song, dance and music to the human race. Some Mibu are believed to have been inspired by him.

Bomong Moné - is the goddess of light and heat. He is actually known as the Sun. She is always radiant, radiant and beautiful. His light, warmth and beauty instil unity, peace, harmony and truth in man.

Ki: né Mone - Goddess of fertility, Productivity and Satisfaction. Her other name is Kine Na. ne, her position is in the interior of the earth (like Basumati) and his kingdom. Cucumbers are generally believed to be on the farm. So, she is the mother of abundance, killer of poverty and hunger.

Misum Boté - God of death (like Yam), valuable property owner of gems and copper vessels. He is the first to suffer death as mentioned in *A: bang*. No deity had experienced death before him. According to this story, Tani: (or *Ni: bo*), meaning the first man to die, did not bury the body of Misum Boté. Therefore, human beings inherit the property of Misum Boté as a result of which the germs of death are transmitted to human beings and human beings are forced to die.

Da: di Bote - Goddess of Mithun (Éso) and domesticated animals. Human society derives Mithun from him. At the festival *So: lung* (Eso - Mithun, Lung - Plural *So: lung* - numbers of Mithun) three days and three nights are spent together to satisfy *Da: di Boté* The song is known as the "*Limir Sobo A: bang*" for the purpose of *Da: di Boté*.

Gumin Boté - is also known as "*Gu: min Soyin*". He is the protector, saviour deity of the individual clan or family without his protection discipline, joy, harmony is not maintained.

Bisi Boté - He is a smith (a metalsmith), that is, he makes swords, knife, spade melting the shell etc. He invents instruments and their tools (comparable to Bishwakarma). Through him the technique of using lo, copper, silver, gold, etc., was acquired by the human race.

Déndé Sobo - The spiritual portrait or idol of the giant Mithun (Éso). From all parts of his body the fertile earth, beneficial plants, edible leaves were created. This means that the soil, which is essential for human life, comes from the body of the *Déndé Sobo*.

PÉDONG - THE MOTHER OF ALL LIVING BEING:

From *Pédong*, she is considered as Mother of all living being on earth. She basically gave birth to the following off springs and they are known as *Pomjir Ui* (Malevolent Gods) including Tani: (Human). They are -

POMJIR UI (Malevolent Gods):

1. *Pédong>Do: ban>Banji* - Banmang (Carnivorous, Bloodsuckers)
2. *Pédong>Do: mi>Mi: mur* - Lomang (Owner of Smith)
3. *Pédong>Do: bi > Bisi* - Ya: da (God of Smith)
4. *Pédong>Do: da>Da: di* - Boté (God of domestic animals)
5. *Pédong>Do: dín>Dímu* - Ta: ya (Owner of Medicinal plants)
6. *Pédong>Do: bí>Bírfi* - Bíag (Owner of water bodies),
7. *Pédong>Do: mi>Misum* - Miyang (Owner of pearls and ornaments),
8. *Pédong>Do: nom>Nomgu* - Nomnang (Owner of wild animals),
9. *Pédong>Do: mi>Miti* - Mijo (Owner of Apong/rice beer),
10. *Pédong>Do: si>Sili* - Sidong (God of Thunder and volt),
11. *Pédong>Dongi>Ngité* - Po: ro (God of children diseases),
12. *Pédong>Dongi>Ngi: ji* - Ngi: pong (Ni: ji - Ni: pong) - Disease God of Pragnant Women),
13. *Pédong>Do: rod>Rodmang>Ma: si>Sibe*: Siyin (Monkey),
14. *Pédong>Do: ro>Robo* (God of forest),
15. *Pédong>Do: ni* - A: ji (Fore father of Human being),
16. *Pédong>Do: mi>Mili* - Minam (God of Pandemic diseases),
17. *Pédong>Do: pu>Puduk* - Pusa (Frog).

MALEVOLENT GODS (*Pomjir Ui*):

Most of the unholy gods and goddesses are born from *Pédong* mother. They are evil, jealous, jealous and vindictive of the human race. When they are dissatisfied, human beings are harmed. This is the reason why these gods and goddesses are kept in a state of worship by satisfying them.

RO: BO - another name for Taro. He is incorporeal and invisible. He is the main evil deity of man. He is jealous, jealous and vindictive. In the story of *A: bang*, *'Ro: bo* or Taro was *Ni: bo*, meaning the cousin of Tani: or the human race. *Ni: bo*, was clever. Therefore, the property of the bird

was acquired by *Ni: bo* from all quarters. As a result, the two brothers started working together. The world's first kébang or meeting is multiplied by various deities to resolve the issue. He is fortunate enough to be the owner of all the property by conspiring to do so. *Ro: bo* takes refuge in forests, trees, mountains and rivers, which are uninhabitable in human society without any share. From then on, those objects of nature were considered as *Ro: bo's* property. In order to hide from the human race, a fictional trap called *Do: ying Sabron* was set ablaze. From then on, *Ro: bo* became an incorporeal deity in the shadow of human eyes. *Ni: bo* became the unrivalled owner of the material world. But *Ro: bo's* vindictive attitude remained forever. So, people started doing bad things every time they enter into the forests and do bad things. He is incorporeal, but in various forms of human disguise, he does not want to inflate human beings.

ÉPOM OR YAPOM - the offspring of *Ro: bo* - they are demonic and incorporeal. There are both males and females *Épom*. Trees, forests, Spring - rivers, mountain - hills, various shrubs are their habitat. All the birds, animals in the forest are considered as his property. They harm people by handing over their property. A human child is abducted. Bargaining is done by offering ritual worship to those *Époms*.

And in order to maintain the connection between the human bodies, some of the selected human beings are specially attracted and taken to forest and some of the techniques of their science are used to communicate with the human society. This is the link between human beings and *Épom*. Defenders are called *Mirí, Miri* or *Mibu*.

BÍRÍ BOTÉ - Also known as *Bíri Bíag*, the river, canal, the god of the sea. He speeds water from the mountains with the name of '*Bíri Bíag*'. They look like horned reptiles or dragons. His horns feed on the banks of the river. His vehicle is a duck. Misings now call it *Asi Uyu*. This is because of the fact that ducks do not eat meat at any time and do not eat ducks.

DÍ: MU BOTÉ - A deity situated on the top of a mountain. All the icebergs in the world are under his control. So the animals on the mountain, the medicinal plants (poisons), the insects, the birds are his property. When a person enters such a place unauthorised he dies in the winter.

NOMGU BOTE - is the regulator of disease, poverty and suffering. He is believed to be under the earth or in the interior. Wild animals, innumerable insects and birds are his servants. These lead to the spread of disease and poverty among the people. When he is dissatisfied, he kills his servants and spreads disease, destroying crops, leading to famine: Human poverty increases. Disease, poverty and famine are the causes of human suffering. *Nomgu Boté* is the controlling deity.

LÉ: MUG BOTÉ - is a terrifying deity who came to earth in the form of storm, thunder, bolt, cyclone, etc. In the form of a black cloud, he orbits instantly from the Earth's surface to the surface. He is wind. The transmission and movement of burning fire is under his direction. The fires that burned down houses and villages were his fame. He is always

terrible and merciless. The one who obstructs his path burns himself.

BANJI BOTÉ - Another name is *Banji - Banmang* - Bloodthirsty and life - destroying deity. This deity, who always carries poisonous weapons, loves rebellion, war, struggle, etc., and incorporates them into the human race. Engaging in warfare consumes blood. As soon as *Banji Banmang* enters the human society, quarrels, fights and fratricide begin. He is the possessor of merciless and demonic signs.

LA: DANG BOTÉ - Water god. His job is to drown people in water. It is believed that when a drowning person dies, the head is swallowed by an axe under the water.

NI: JI NI: PONG - A goddess in forest. He screams in the middle of the night and weakens the human body and mentally. He is a conspiratorial but sharp. Excessive haemorrhage in the human body leads to death, miscarriage and stillbirth during childbirth.

MÉDÉNG MONÉ - is also known as *Médéng Suseng* - a conspiratorial moving goddess; killing, looting tactics in his hands. He may be trampled underfoot by the people and may be traumatized or murdered in any place. He can engage the nation, the neighbours, the village, the country in a bloody war.

POLONG SOBO - is a fictional deity in the form of Mithun.

According to legend, the various parts of his body were covered with earthworms, poisonous plants, leaves (such as cigarette leaves) etc. Due to this obstruction (i. e kite and poisonous tree - forest), people are not able to roam freely. *Polong sobo* is a hindrance to human progress.

KARPUNG KARDUG - If you look at the list of *Karpung Kardug*, you will see that Karpung female, Kardug was male. They were cousins. As they grew up, Karpung became very beautiful and unfortunately her brother Kardug fell in love her. But because this love was not considered within the rules of the society, they were driven away from the society and sent to heaven. But their beauty shone in the sky and light of love shone from the sky to the earth. There are many legends in the Mising and Adi society that came with Karpung and Kardug. The word Karpumpuli comes from this.

2. Conclusion

In *Mibu a: bang*, the traditional thinking and imagination of the Mising people about the universe, animals and inert creation is clearly visible. The scientific idea of how the universe came into being slowly from a vacuum. The appearance of Mother *Pédong* (Rain) on Earth and the habitation of animals is worthy of recognition. On the other hand, the belief that benefits or harms misfortunes, diseases, etc. from the benevolent and harmful gods and goddesses born later in their lives is among the most notable folk beliefs.

After observation it has come to conclusion that this sacred Oral text in question today requires immediate attention for documentation or else, the day may not be far away when this marvellous system of narrating and or singing of such a huge volume of the Oral Text of the Adis and Mising become a past event. The present day generation practically stays away from the society in pursuit of the formal education. They no more listen to the elders and experts in performance and learn the text in traditional system. Neither have they any facility to learn them in Class rooms as there are no lessons provided in the text books. Therefore, the number of new learners of the same has declined down to an alarming level. Secondly the A: bang is narrated in an archaic language of the Misings which the present day generation does not understand anymore and thus making it more and more difficult for them to learn the same. The old people having adequate knowledge on the subject and also the experts are fading away in the natural process making the bridging between the old and the new more and more difficult. However the importance of the Oral Text on the life of the people cannot be over emphasized, for the text contains all the philosophies of their life which affects even their day to day activities.

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