

CULTURAL AND VILLAGE LIFE OF THE BODOS WITH REFERENCE TO KHERAI FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT

Kherai is one of the oldest religious festivals of the Bodo tribes. The Bodo tribe is considered as the earliest settlers of Assam. They inhabit mostly in the northern bank of the Brahmaputrariver. The worship of Kherai signifies the materialistic desire of the Bodo people. It is the source of hope and prospect of agricultural life of the community. Kherai is performed in the form of worship in conjunction with dance and songs with a view to propitiating Bathou Bwrai, Mainao, and other deities so that the agricultural life of the community may thrive and bring prosperity. The ceremonial side of the festival is but a dramatic in nature and the inner significance of the dramatic prayer is intimately connected with the materialistic philosophy of the pastoral Bodos.

KEYWORDS: *Kherai, Bodo, Bathou, Sijou, Doudini*