

Tradition and Women- Reading Lumar Dai's "The Bride Price"
from a Feminist point of view, questioning the traditions.

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Abstract:- Lumar Dai is one of the first generation fiction writers from Arunachal Pradesh. He originally wrote in Assamese language. Translations of his works like "Koinar Muliya" into English as "The Price of Bride" by Tilottoma Misra gave access to the many readers of the dominant English Language. Lumar Dai, through his writings, has sought to depict the sensitive questioning of the Traditional Institutions, which gave a very little space to the voices of the youths, particularly the women. The impact of modernity and progress, as an outcome of the European Enlightenment upon the people of Arunachal Pradesh in the nineteenth century, which then was still in the hands of the traditional institution is revealed in his works. Here attempt is made to show how the tradition and the generally accepted cultural practices affect the lives of women in a patriarchal society. "The Price of Bride" gives a glimpse of the existing tradition of the Child Marriage in Arunachal Pradesh among the Adi people. Kargum, the father of the protagonist, sold Gumba at an age when she hardly knew anything about the marriage. Gumba was extremely surprised to know about herself being already married to a person whom she knew nothing of. Gumba is not the only girl who has been victim to this tradition since time immemorial. The story of Jamay, another girl in the novel, was same as that of Gumba. She was sent off to her husband's house when she was just in class viii. Other girls of Gumba's age like Yeter and Libam were also victim to this evil practice of child marriage. Women have no choice and voice of their own to fight for their rights. Gumba, the protagonist of the novel "The Price of Bride" protests against this tradition of child marriage and questions the validity of the Tradition and Culture which gives no space to women to have their own choice and voice. Lumar Dai, thus by introducing the character of Gumba, perhaps the first fictional women, questions the validity of Adi tradition fostering child marriage and the bride price which degrades the women. Gumba's fight for the women's right to have freedom of speech and choice begins from home as she had to start her fight against her own father at first and then the society. The 'Kebang' the highest traditional judicial institution of the Adi's at last had to listen to Gumba's fight for her freedom. Thus Gumba questions the traditionally accepted norms of the Adi society which curtailed the rights of the women. Here the attempt is made to see as to how the tradition affects the womenfolk in a patriarchal society and how Gumba, a representative of the educated women, fights for her rights.

Key Words:- Tradition, Culture, Patriarchy, Child Marriage, Women's Rights, Bride Price, Women Education, Gumba.

Upholding one's Tradition and Culture is very much needed in preserving the identity of a Society. The Tribal people generally live secluded from the mainstream society. They have their own tradition and social customs which helped them preserve their society and cultural identity for ages since time immemorial. Every society has its own way of living styles and customary laws. In order to manage a society there arise the necessity of adopting some customary rules and regulations which are recognized as customary laws in a

society. These Customary laws have helped a society to overcome many hurdles in their way to civilization. The entire life of a person is surrounded by dos and don'ts laid down by the society for its better managements. These laws control and influence the entire lifestyle of a person from his birth to death. There are rituals and customs that help a person to grow in accordance to the norms of a particular society. Adi people have their own traditions and social customs too. The customary laws and rituals influence one's birth, marriage and the way of life and the death itself. All the rituals related to birth, death, marriage etc. have tremendous social significance. In the book "History and Culture of The Adi's" Dr. Tai Nyori writes about the functioning mechanism of the Adi Society. In other words The Adis have their own way of Administrative system which helped them maintain their Society in the midst of many adversities. Dr. Nyori writes "The traditional and customary laws of the Adi Society are executed by the *Kebang* acted as courts". (History and Culture of the Adi's, chapter V, pge-156) Dr. Niyori defines *Kebang* as-"Theoretically the *Kebang* is a democratic institution and all the members of the village have to take part in it."(History and Culture of the Adi's, chapter V, pge- 134) He further says- "Every Adi village (*dolung*) is run by a Council called *Kebang*. All the adult members of the village are its members and they participate in the sessions of the *Kebang*. The Deliberations of the *Kebang* are guided by the elders of the council who are known as the *Kebang-abus*. Thus, the *Kebang* has a collective leadership". (History and Culture of the Adi's, chapter V, page- 133). Thus, *Kebang* forms an important mechanism of Adi Administrative System. All administrative system such as Administrative, Judicial, Political, and giving Judicial and Civil Justice are carried out by the *Kebang* in Adi Society. There are three types of *Kebang* in Adi Society, namely the "*Dolung-Kebang*"(village court), "*Bango Kebang* (court of an area), and the "*Bogum-bokang Kebang* (the court of the whole tribe), This analysis is made to understand how the customary laws and traditional customs affected the lives of women in Adi Society through exploring the agony faced by the women characters in Lumar Dai's novels. The women characters in Lumar Dai's novels and their fictional experiences are very much representative and shows how some of the traditional administrative mechanism can be dangerous to the progress of modern generation, particularly the women in a patriarchal society. The novels taken for study in this research work reveals how, in many cases in spite of promising equal rights, women become the victim of some the traditions and customary laws. Because, in most of the cases, the so called the burden of Cultural Identity, is borne by women alone.

Exploring the impact of Tradition upon a Society, this analysis tries to unearth the viability of Tradition in present scenario upon the Adi Society, particularly the women. Reading of Lumar Dai's "The Bride Price", from a Feminist point of view, questioning the tradition and its validity in the light of the welfare of the Women interest, reveals how the tradition being regarded as the pillar of identity of a society can be so dangerous means of women discrimination. So many crimes, in the name of upholding the tradition and culture are being executed against women. Lumar Dai reveals these issues where tradition stands on the way to women emancipation and making them competent to face the present situation of the competitive

world. Lumar Dai, in his “The Price of Bride”, particularly deals with these issues of Adi Society where he reveals the evil impact of the tradition like Bride Price and Child Marriage ruined the lives of many women in Adi Society of Arunachal Pradesh. A close reading of his novels like “Paharor Xhile Xhile (1960)”, “Prithivir Hanhi (1962-63)”, “Mon Aru Mon (1965)”, and “Koinar Mulya”(1975-76), reveals women being victimized in different stages of Adi Society in the name of upholding the Tradition. The burden of promoting the Culture and Tradition of a Society is somehow imposed upon the Women. The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms defines Feminism as “A mode of literary and Cultural discussion and reassessment inspired by modern Feminist thoughts from which has developed since 1970s not a method of interpretation but an arena of debate about the relation between literature and Socio-Cultural subordination borne by women as writers, readers or fictional characters within a male dominated social order”. In the light of such interpretation Lumar Dai’s “The Price of Bride” is a sincere attempt questioning the socially accepted norms of Child Marriage, Bride Price and its impact upon the women. A close reading of the text reveals that Kargum, the father of the protagonist, is the true representation of the Patriarchal Social Structure of the Adi Society. He does not provide any space to his wife and daughters. At the beginning of the novel itself he is seen as recounting the days when he sold his daughter. He was rather afraid of her daughter’s education which might change her mind and might go with other boys if she is grown up. So, the best thing for him is to send his daughter to her husband, to whom he had sold his daughter in her childhood itself about which his daughter knew nothing of. Kargum is perhaps afraid that if his daughter marries other boy he will have to repay the Bride Price with fine. Because according to the Adi Civil Laws under section Personal Law no 7(a), it is said “If a women indulges in adultery, the husband may Divorce her and he is entitled to get back the bride-price. If the person involved it adultery likes to marry the woman, he will have to pay the Bride-Price to the husband”. (History of The Adi’s page 154) All these decisions are taken up by the *Kebang*. Same law is applicable to Gumba if she refused to go to her husband’s house. So Kargum decides to send his daughter Gumba to her husband Dakto’s house. If she denies the marriage Kargum will have to return the bride-price and will have to face the *Kebang*, which will be a disgrace to him. He is seen determined to send his daughter to her husband’s house. This is how Kargum represents the very patriarchal dominance upon his daughter and wife. Gumba’s plight is representative. If not all, many women in Arunachal Pradesh faced this ordeal of child marriage and the bride price for a long time. Unfortunately no women dared to question this custom before, and if someone did the outcome was terrible. Men folk, being the part of the imposing mechanism of this tradition, did not think it necessary for consideration. This tradition was considered as a part of their custom and a part of their cultural identity. It was perhaps Lumar Dai, who for the first time questioned this tradition fictionally in “Koinar Mulliya” or “The Bride Price” and send a wave of voice for women emancipation. The educated sections of the Adi People were awoken by reading Dai’s book. The readers were made to think over the plight of Gumba, the protagonist, and refer it to the happenings of their society. If not all, the educated women of the Adi Society began to question the validity of the tradition of the child marriage and the giving and accepting the bride price. Lumar Dai, carefully takes up the task of reforming his society of such tradition of his society

which is set to degrade the women's value. By creating the fictional character Gumba, and showing her plight as a woman due to the burden of cultural identity, Lumar Dai successfully draws the attention of his readers and thus creates awareness by making them participate in ordeals faced by her. Gumba, at the beginning, was not aware of herself being the victim of the child marriage and the bride price. She was rather more concerned about the situation of her other friends of her age who were long married before and the live example of the victims of child marriage in front of her. She being an educated girl questions the validity of the tradition which victimized them. But when she realized her own condition and how she also had been married in her childhood, she was shocked and had to fight at her own house first. Because the system was so strongly rooted in the society that it has spread to every household. So Gumba had to fight against her own father to fight this system in the society. Every word used by Gumba shows the magnitude of the pain she is undergoing and pierces the reader's heart. Gumba's voice is beaconing and invites the readers to participate in the fight against the evils of the tradition that do not provide space to the young generation, particularly the women.

In the Book "Marriage and Culture, Reflections from Tribal Societies of Arunachal Pradesh by Tamo Mibang and M.C. Beherah" D. K. Duarah in his essay "Aspects of Child Marriage in Arunachal Pradesh- A Study in Tradition and Transition" talks about the existence of the child marriage in Arunachal Pradesh. He says that "The Child Marriage is prevalent mostly among the Tani group of tribes namely Adi, Apatani, Nyishi, Hill Miri, Tagin and the Mishmis" (Marriage and Culture Vol-II pg-441). He also talks about the evil impacts of the child marriage upon the women folk in Arunachal Pradesh. He mentions five reasons or the factors promoting the Child Marriage and the Polygamy in Arunachal Pradesh. These Factors as mentioned by D.K. Duarah are- i) Tradition and Compulsion, ii) Social System and Status iii) Economy and the Bride Price iv) Security and Sanctity and v) Custom and Comfort (Ibid 442). Duarah says that in the name of maintaining the so called Tradition, the Child Marriage system has been continued by majority of the tribes in Arunachal Pradesh. In such practice the consent of the girl is never taken into consideration which has adversely affected the society. This is shown by Lumar Dai in his *The Bride Price*. Gumba is shown as a victim to such evil practice in the *Bride Price*. This Child Marriage is practiced also to maintain Social System and the status. In a patriarchal society of Arunachal Pradesh a person's Social status was counted by the number of wives a person keeps. This very practice encouraged Polygamy and promoted Child Marriage. Besides this the agrarian economy demands more number of working labors. This encouraged polygamy among the tribes. It is also seen that these people gave importance to security and Sanctity of women. Child marriage, as they thought it to be, helped them to maintain the sanctity of a girl as betrothed girl would not engage anyway in pre-marital physical relationship. Such issues related to Child Marriage and its evil impact upon the family and the society is vividly depicted in the books studied here. Marriage as a Social Institution plays an important role in molding the Society. However the existence of Polygamy and Child Marriage has

an adverse effect on the society. The Bride Price is an important text where the Protagonist has to fight at home first against such evils of child marriage. This shows how deeply it has rooted in the society.

The traditional practice of taking bride price was much prevalent among the Adi People of Arunachal Pradesh. The worse part with this practice was the practice of child marriage. Lumar Dai, in his "The Bride Price", makes an attempt to depict the resisting voice of women through the character of Gumba, the daughter of Kargum. Gumba, perhaps is the first fictional women to question the "Child Marriage" system. The conversation of Yeter, Jamai and Yabam with Gumba, the three fictional women who have been the victim of Child Marriage, reveals the agony of Child Marriage. They were all victims of the customs of Child marriage. When Gumba expressed her desire to pursue higher studies Yabam sighed deeply and said "we are rotting here in the village." Jamai too expressed her anger saying- "I get angry with people like my father when I think of all these things. If my father had not sold me in my childhood, I too could have gone to school like you" (Price of Bride, writing from N.E. page- 6) Libam also expressed her dissatisfaction of the existing Tradition and the Customs saying-"Although I haven't been sold in my childhood, still I can't accept this customs". (Price of Bride, writing from N.E. pge- 6) Jamai asked Gumba- "Don't you know my story, Gumba? I had just finished my class eight exams when my father and the elders asked me to go to my husband's house. When I refused, they reported the matter to my husband's family and they in turn brought the matter to the people's court. It was decided there that I should be dragged by force to my husband's house and made to sleep with him. I ran away from my husband the next day. But, once more they caught me and did the same thing over and again. They locked me up in a separate room after that." (Price of Bride, writing from N.E. page- 6) A careful analysis of this conversation reveals how terrible the effects of such traditions and customs are upon the women. These Customs are arbitrarily imposed upon women. Jamai and Libam, other two girls of Gumba's age, too are angry with this custom of child marriage. There was no space for women's voice in the then Adi society. If someone tried to question the tradition, consequences are terrible. The expression made by the girls is very clear in this respect. Yeter reveals-"But if we complain about these customs, they threaten to break our teeth", (Lumar Dai-7)

Lumar Dai, as a first generation fiction writer, actively participated in the works of Social changes that the Land of the Rising Sun was undergoing through his writings. Tilottoma Misra, in her introduction to "The Oxford Anthology of Writings from North-East India" opines that Lumar Dai and Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi have sought to depict the sensitive questioning of the values represented by the traditional Institutions which give little space to the voices of the youth and particularly the women. Lumar Dai presents two types of women in his novella "The Bride Price". The First categories of Women are uneducated and have been bearing the burden of Social Institutions like the child marriage and the practice of bride price. Another category of women is the educated ones. Jamai, Libam and Yeter belong to the first category of women who have been the victims of child marriage. They witness the brutality of the child marriage and the impact of the taking of bride price. The other group of women was the one who came under the influence of

modern education system. With the spread of modern education in Arunachal Pradesh, a section of educated women was born who could not but protest the existing evil practices of the society like polygamy and child marriage. Lumar Dai presents the character of Gumba in his "The Bride Price" who began to question the validity of the Tradition and the Cultures which does not provide space to women. Gumba belong to the educated section of the women. Gumba's questioning of the Tradition of her society is explicitly shown in the novel. Gumba, until she discovered herself being sold as a child, was worried only about the conditions of her friends. Seeing the helpless condition of her friends, Gumba remarked- "Men consider women to be their private property. When a girl is born, they think that they have acquired another piece of property. This customs of trading with the girls must be done away with".(Lumar Dai- pge 7) These quotes vividly reveals the emergence of a new trend in Adi Society, where the aged-old Tradition is being questioned. The conversation of the female characters in the novel reveals how badly the so called Tradition affected them. Their lives were completely ruined and they expressed their feeling of suffocation under these Traditional practices. Gumba, being an educated girl, came into contact with the outside world in her hostel. She has broader mind now and began to look at things differently. She is shown as one determined to change the existing Social Customs or the Tradition of Child Marriage, Polygamy and the taking of Bride Price. But she was not free from this Tradition too. She was unaware of her being sold to somebody about who she knew nothing. When she came to know about this she was thunderstruck and was utterly puzzled. The argument between Gumba and Kargum is structurally given to show the agony faced by a woman due to the Traditional Customs of the Society and at the same time the evils of patriarchal domination. Gumba asks her father- "Father, tell me frankly, when did you sell me and at what price?"(Lumar Dai, pge-8) Kargum's reply to his daughter is very significant in this respect. Kargum just tried to show his patriarchal domination. He tries to put down his daughter's voice. He shouted at his daughter thus- "Will you keep quiet?" But Gumba protested against his father saying- "I won't. It is important for me to know when and how I was married". But her father Krgum was very adamant in his opinion and says- "You have been sold. That's all. There is nothing more to say on this. You have no right to say a word on this matter". Then Gumba asked her father bitterly- "That means I am somebody's slave?" To this Kargum's reply is very patriarchal- "Yes, exactly". (Lumar Dai, pge-8) From this conversation, we as readers are made to feel the emotions of Gumba. Gumba is an educated girl and she questions the existing norms of society, particularly the child marriage, where a woman has no voice and choice but has to follow the system blindly without any question. Gumba was sold at an age when she was just a child. She did not remember anything about it. Gumba struggles to recall the incident of her wedding. But she could not. Anyone who reads it is made to feel and ponder upon the evils of such practices where only a section of society, in most of the cases, the women, becomes victim.

Lumar Dai, through his "Koinar Mullya" translated as "The Bride Price" by Tilottoma Misra, shows how the Tradition affects the lives of women in a patriarchal society through the introduction of the institution of marriage. Through the representation of the gravity of evil impact of Traditional Social Customs like child

marriage and exchange of “Bride Price” upon the women characters like Gumba and her friends in “Koinar Mulliya”, Lumar Dai perhaps tried to appeal the Adi Society to do away with evils of their aged old tradition and negotiate themselves to the call of modernity giving the women voice and choice of their own. The arguments and the conversations of Kargum and his daughter Gumba, the main protagonist, is of very significant reference for understanding the evil impacts of the Tradition and Customs upon the women. Lumar Dai presents Kargum as the uneducated person who strongly adheres to the age-old tradition of accepting “Bride Price”. The opening lines of the novel shows how Kargum tries to recount the year he sold Gumba to Mindak as the wife of his son Dakto in her childhood. Gumba, on the other hand, represents the educated section of womenfolk who raises her voice against such tradition of child marriage and evils of bride price. Gumba was at first worried about the conditions of her friends like Jamai, Libam and Yeter, the victims of the Tradition and the Customs of the Adi Community. Gumba was much surprised to know that she had already been sold to someone she knew nothing in her childhood which she hardly remembers anything. She was forced to leave her studies and send to her husband’s house immediately. This was unacceptable for Gumba. According to the Traditional Social Customs of the Adis, selling and buying a girl is a part of the marriage tradition. As per this tradition or the customary practice Gumba’s marriage is fixed long back in her childhood to Mindak’s son Dakto. Gumba is sold for five mithuns, seven cows, eleven brass dishes, six bowls and three thousand rupees in cash as bride price. It seems like never heard before, but that’s the truth and women are the victim of this evil custom of child marriage and accepting bride price. Lumar Dai seem to reform this Custom through the representation of the agonies of the women. Gumba’s protesting voice is a message for every reader to think upon the validity of the traditions like child marriage and selling their daughters for bride price. The evils of the tradition are so much rooted in the Adi society that Gumba has to fight against her own father at home and the Society in presence of the elders. Gumba tells her father-“You can tie up my body, but not my mind”. (Price of Bride, Misra, pge-10) This arguments made by Gumba against her father clearly indicates how terrible it is for a women to undergo such a bitter experience of the custom of child marriage where a woman’s consent is never taken into consideration. The experience of Gumba is not a single instance. Before Gumba, Jamai, Libam and Yeter have already undergone theses horrible experiences of the customs of child marriage and bride price. Lumar Dai, thus presents the evil impacts of the child marriage and the acceptance of the bride price existing among the Adi Community as a Social custom. The bitter experience of Gumba is representative. Other girls like Jamai, Libam and Yeter are already victim to this evil social customs. There might be many others whose agony have not yet been told or are not allowed to tell their story. This practice of child marriage and the Bride Price particularly hampered the lives of the women. But the real impact is felt by the entire community itself as it hinders the women education and the progress of the society in general. Women form the half of any society. If the woman of a particular society is left behind at the cost of our Tradition and age-old social customs, it really affects the progress of a society.

A careful analysis of Lumar Dai's other novels such as "Paharor Xile Xile"(1961), "Prithivir Hanhi",(1963), "Mon Aru Mon"(1968) and posthumously published "Uppar Mahal"(2003), exhibits Lumar Dai's idea of representing the women discrimination at different stages or periods of Adi civilization. His novels reveal how at different times, women in Adi Society, underwent discrimination with different magnitude. In his first novel "Paharor Xile Xile", besides depicting the rich Cultural Heritage of the Adi's, Dai also tries to reveal the plights of Adi women. The existence of the practice of Slavery System among the Adis is reflected here. Being a close observer of the Society, Dai witnessed the evils of the existing slavery system of the then Adi Society. Bati, the protagonist of the novel, is born in a slave family. He saw that the persons born in a slave family is always considered as inferior. And if the person is a woman like 'Bati' of the novel, she suffers twice. Bati was very conscious about this. She knew that she comes of a slave family and therefore, she cannot think of marrying a boy from non-slave family. In being a slave's daughter she is twice deprived. Realizing this Bati rejects Jalam's love time and again. Jalam comes of a good family, whose father is a Gaoburha, or the village chief. Jalam's father Bijon is against their marriage. Because Bijon thinks that his son marrying a girl from slave family will degrade his family's status. Jalam, is shown as trying to breach this barrier of social discrimination and marries Bati in spite of all odds. In the novel, Dai shows that this marriage, however, could not raise the status of Bati in the society. She is rather blamed for every misfortune that befell in the family. Bati was considered as the cause of bad luck in the family. She was even regarded responsible for the burning of the faddy field, which brought starvation in the family. At the end even her own husband disowns her as the cause of all the misfortunes in the family. Bati does not raise her voice against her but silently suffers all the pain and the tortures. Thus Bati suffers more because she is a woman and all the more she comes of a slave family. So no one comes forward to talk in favour of her. Thus Lumar Dai, in his first novel, shows how Bati, suffers more only because she is a slave girl. Had Bati been not a slave girl she would not have suffered that much. She is an example of a typical suppressed woman who just silently bears the discrimination.

In another novel "Prithibir Hanhi"(1963), Dai shows the character of Kardug, the fictional protagonist, as the very representative of the patriarchal set up of the Adi Society. Kardug, in the novel, takes the help of Kebang, the highest judicial institution of the Adi's, to humiliate Gasi, his betrothed wife on the suspect oh having illicit affairs with Bangkong. But his hidden motive was to free himself of Gasi and spread rumour against her and marry Liyi, whom he longed for secretly. When Liyi reveals Kardug's dirty game of deceiving innocent Gasi in front of the *Kebang*, Kardug gives Liyi a fatal blow and kills her in the very presence of the Kebang. Here Kardug is presented as a man having no respect for women. He considers women of very low esteem. In other words Kardug is a true representative of the patriarchal set up of the Adi Society. Otherwise Kardug would not have the courage to behave so harshly upon Gasi and Liyi. With regard to the role of women in a Kebang, Dr. Tai Nyori, in his book History and Culture of The Adis, wrote- "Theoretically the Kebang is a democratic institution and all members of the village have to take part in it.

Practically, however, the participation of women in the *Kebang* is very limited.”(Dr. Tai Nyori, History and Culture of The Adis, pge-134) The reasons for not taking part by women in *kebang* are many. Some of them as mentioned by Dr. Nyori are- First, because of the traditional taboos that women undergo during their periods or during the child-birth in which they are not allowed to enter the *dere* or *the moshup*(assembly hall). Secondly, Adi Society is a patriarchal and patrilineal and therefore the role of male is always predominant in almost all spheres of life. Thirdly, the girl of a village after marriage go away to other clans in other villages, and in the same way, the women in the village always comes from outside. As such the Adi Consider that women are temporary members and they will not be able to keep the secrecy of the village, particularly in matters relating to inter-clan feuds (Dr. Tai Nyori, History and Culture of The Adis, pge-134). It was because of this that people like Kardug could behave in a public place like this upon women. Lumar Dai, thus carefully shows through his writings the patriarchal nature of the Adi Society, where women seem to have little space for voice and choice.

In the novel *Upar Mahal*,(posthumously published in 2003) Lumar Dai presents the corrupt high class society of Arunachal Pradesh. This novel is different from the other novels published earlier in his life. Here the author tries to show, how in an educated society people use money, mind and power for evil purposes. Jalam, the main protagonist of the novel, is a graduate and represents the contemporary educated section of the society. However after entry into the politics Jalam becomes very corrupt person and becomes a womanizer. He takes advantage of the dumb girl Yabin and involves in a physical relationship with the helpless poor dumb girl. He also impregnates Drema, his friend Sonam's sister, as a result Drema gives birth to a child. Jalam also is seen misusing his power as a home minister. Jalam kills Yaka with the help of doctors as she bore him a child. Thus, to hide his crime, he misuses his money and power. In this novel too the victims were mostly women. Jalam uses women for his physical needs only. This is injustice and a crime against women. However, Jalam succeeds in committing crime against women one after the other because he belongs to the privilege class of the society, the patriarchy. Jalam also kills Tayer, Yaka's brother-in-law in the police custody and makes it a suicide case just to hide his crime. A careful sequential analysis of Dai's novels reveals that men used women down the ages for his personal gains only in most cases. Dai, in his first novel “Paharor Xile Xile” shows how women suffered twice in being a slave's daughter. Bati, the slave's daughter was an uneducated girl and silently undergoes the ordeals of women sufferings. In “Prithbir Hanhi”, his second novel, Dai shows the plight of Gasi and Liyi who were the victims of Kardug's evil designs. Here too the author tried to show how uneducated women became more prone to the male domination. Because in his fourth novel “The Koinar Muliya” or “The Bride Price” Lumar Dai introduces an educated female protagonist, who begins to question the age-old tradition of Child marriage and the process of giving and accepting bride price in Adi Society. Gumba, the protagonist of the novel succeeds in fighting the tradition and seemed to show the victory of women over tradition. Because she made the *Kebang* realize the evils of the tradition of child marriage and bride price in the novel. She was freed from the bondage of the child

marriage in the novel, thus giving some relief to women in the society. However, his last novel again shows how women became the victims of the evil designs of men in a progressive educated society of Arunachal Pradesh even in contemporary times. Here the author shows how the patriarchal mechanism helps the evil minded people to materialize their hidden motive. Here example may be made of Kardug, the fictional character of the novel Prithibir Hanhi, where he uses the Kebang to materialize his hidden motive of having Liyi as wife instead of Gasi, his betrothed wife.

Lumar Dai's "Koinar Muliya" is the best example of women resistance in a patriarchal Adi Society of Arunachal Pradesh. Being a woman her fight for her right and freedom of voice and choice begins at home. Gumba's father is the representative of patriarchal social set up of the Adi Society. Her concern for her fellow women in the novel about the evil impact of the child marriage is a true representation of women fighting for their rights. Gumba herself, being the victim of the tradition of child marriage makes it more clear about plight of the women under such Tradition and Customary laws. Lumar Dai, himself was against such evil traditional practices and so he created a fictional world where he provides women a platform to question the tradition and the other Customs of her society. In reality Gumba might not have that much liberty to fight for her rights. Hence Lumar Dai shows how terribly Gumba suffered under so called tradition and the customs. He also shows how Gumba had to fight against her own father first and then the society in the Kebang. The success of Gumba in getting freed from the bondage of child marriage is a good sign for the entire womenfolk of Arunachal Pradesh. Hence, the novel The Price of Bride may be read as feminist text representing the north eastern region of India where women becomes the victim of many traditions and customs, where women are imposed upon with the burden of bearing the flag of so called Cultural Identity. The importance of Lumar Dai and his works lies in his endeavor to uplift the youth of his land. He particularly tried to uplift the women and provide them space to raise their voice through the medium of literature.

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