
The Novels of Syed Abdul Malik and Bibhutibhushan Bondopdhyay: A Comparative Study

Mousumi Chetia

Research Scholar, Department of Assamese, Dibrugarh University, Dibrugarh, Assam

Corresponding Author: Mousumi Chetia, E-mail: mousumichetia118@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Comparative literature is a new prospective which established in the nineteenth century. In a comparative method, all literature is considered as a single subject and a meticulous analysis of literature is carried out in a scientific and through manner. It is also called a kind of 'Intra-literature' study. Novel is a branch of literature which reflects or presents the human life beautifully. The novels of Syed Abdul Malik and Bibhutibhushan Bondopadhyay are taken up as topics of discussion. To analysis this subject, Sayed Abdul Malik's 'Xurujmukhir Swapna' and 'Rupabarir Palax'; on the other hand, Bibhutibhushan Bandupadhyay's 'Pather pachalii' and 'Aranyak' have been included in the scope. The comparative methods and analytical methods have been used as study methods. For the comparative discussion of the novel, society, love, depiction of nature, human relations, cultural, psychological aspects are taken into consideration.

1. Introduction

Comparative literature is a new prospective established in the nineteenth century. In a comparative method, all literature is considered as a single subject and a meticulous analysis of literature is carried out in a scientific and through manner. In recent time, comparative literature has been used in this particular way. Comparative literature can also be called a kind of 'Intra-Literature' study. According to Henry H. H. Remark, "The study of literature beyond the study of the relationship between literature on the one hand and the other areas of knowledge and belief, such as the arts, philosophy, history, the social sciences, the sciences, religion etc. on the other hand". A novel is a branch of literature which reflects or presents the human life beautifully. The two novelists of India literature who established themselves in the pre-independence period are Syed Abdul Malik and Bibhutibhushan Bondopadhyay. In the field of literature, there is a reason for a comparative discussion of the novels of the two novelities. This is because both novelists have written novels against the backdrop of World War II and contemporary rural society. Both novelists have written novels in Assamese and Bengali in their respective regional languages, although there are some common characteristics between the novels. The numerous numbers of novels are written by Syed Abdul Malik and Bibhutibhushan Bondopadhyay. Therefore, in order to analyze this subject, Syed Abdul Malik's 'Xurujmukhir swapna' and 'Rupabarir Palax' as well as Bibhutibhushan Bondopadhyay's 'Pather Pachalii' and 'Aranyak' have been included in this scope.

2. The novels of Syed Abdul Malik and Bibhutibhushan Bondopadhyay: A comparative study

2.1 Depicting Society

Both Syed Abdul Malik and Bibhutibhushan Bondopadhyay's novels reflect the social imagery –

- i. The reflection of the perfect image of rural society is an important aspect of the novels of both novelists. Malik's novel 'Xurujmukhir Swapna' describes the village of Dalim on the bank of the river Dhansiri. In this way, the image of riverine society is reflected in the novel. On the other hand, the novel 'Rupabarir polax' describes the villages of Rupabari, Sonapara, Rupohi and Jajabari. The novel depicts the life of a village farmer struggling to survive on the land of the Zamidar (a land holder).

In the same way, In Bandopadhyay's novel 'Pather Pachalii' presents the rural society more vividly than artificially filled urban society through the description of Nishindipur village. This novel describes the fights between Sarvajaya and Bhuvan Mukherjee's daughter in-law; in the village, Prasanna Pandit opened a grocery store and found a school; Apu read books in the light of the lamp; The description of the dilapidated condition of Harihar's house shows a picture of rural society.

In the novel 'Aranyaka' the natural beauty of the forest is described as well as the rural simple people adjoining the forest are artistically presented.

- ii) One of the features of the both novelist's novel is the description of a society in which more values are declining. In Malik's novel 'Rupabarir Palax', Jobbar captures girls during a military camp during the war, and in order to take revenge, Kamran's people humiliated Muslima a burned Babar's house. This is a reflection of how the decline in moral valued in society.

On the other hand, in Bondopandhyay's novel, Hari and his wife Sarvajaya were despising and as well as tried to expel their relative elder sister Indir her old age.

While Sarvajaya working as a cook in a well-to-do family in kedarghat, his son in-law Apu was accused of inhuman treatment by the Girish Sarkar while he was sitting in a corner of the 'Sakar theatre' organize at his owner's house. The dialogue is –

"Turn a kisu korese, Jyatha Chokra Kuthyakar, gyan nei, ekebare samne Babura bosben, uni randhunir byata ehese mukher kase boste!"

(You haven't done anything, where are the Boys? No knowledge, the grandparent's will sit right in front of him, he is the cook's son)¹

- iii) Another feature of the novelist is the reflection of the sufferings of the Middle class exploited by the rich, privileged class of society.

Both of the novelist have tried to describe a picture of the twentieth century society in which Zamindari system was prevalent. To give rent; mortgage of property due to lake of food and the Zamidar to seize the property on that situation which Sayed tries to property the plight of the worker's life on the novel.

In the novel 'Rupabarir Palax' Zamidar ordered Babar's father Zahur to bring a rau fish like two hand size from the bill. But he did not get a rau fish of that size. That is why, he had to suffer the punishment. On the other hand, towards the end of the novel 'Pather pachalii', there is a description of the plight in the homes of the elite Punjabi people of Kedarghat. This aspect of the novel is revealed through the sarvajaya character –

"Ei jen Sarvajaya Juju hoye thaka, sarvada mon Jugaiya sola, Aar ekjoner mukher dike chahiya path hata..."

(It's like being poker all the time, always meditating and walking the path looking at one's fall...)²

- iv) Both novelists have described in novels the position of women in contemporary society. In Malik's novel reflect the child marriage prevalent in Assamese society, polygamy, lake of female, education, choosing the way of prostitution out of hunger. For example, in the novel 'Xurujmukhir Swapna' mentions that Kopahi married to Nahar at the age of fourteen. Gulash married three women which reveals the practice of polygamy. In the novel 'Rupabarir Polax' describes how the parents are given priority only by their sons in the field of education and Mariyam chooses the way of prostitution out of hunger.

On the other hand, Bandopandhyay's novel 'Pather pachalii' reveals to the painful situation of widowhood of Indir Thakrun. Harihar and his wife admitted his son Apu to sending school. They donot consider about their daughter Durga to sending school. The novel also mentions that she got married at the age of ten.

"Pritir Mrityur Poro Bossorer Navabibahita patnike Baper Bari feliya rakhiya dekhsara hoiya gelo."

(Ten years after the death of his father, the newlyweds left their father's house and fled the country.)

2.2 Nature depiction

This is an interesting aspect of the depiction of nature in the novels of the two novelists. In the Malik's novel, the depiction of nature is reflected vividly. The nature of Assam as well as the south of Garo Hills have taken place in his novel 'Rupabarir Palax'. The beauty of the novel is enhanced by the description of rivers, forests, nightingales, changing seasons, sky-winds etc.

¹ Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay, 'Pather Pachalii', p. 160

² Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay, 'Pather Pachalii' p. 161

³ Bibhutibhushan Bandopadhyay, 'Pather Pachalii' p. 7

Syed Abdul Malik mentions in his novel 'Rupabarir Palax' that the rivers Padma and Meghna in Mymensingh District and 'Borluit' (Brahmaputra) which alluvial the soil of the village and makes the grain green. The novel also captures the beauty of nature that changes with each passing season in Assam.

In the Malik's novel 'Xurujmukhir Swapna' depicts river Dhansiri flows through the village of Dalim. Some parts of the Nambar forest near the village of Dalim, the forest on the bank of Dhansiri river near the farm house of Gulash. The animals, the green appearance of the forest and the unique of the moonlit. Like Malik, Bibhutibhushan's novels also have a hint of depiction of nature such as the beauty of Isamati River, Dense green grass from river ditches, the field of Sonadanga, hills etc. 'Aranyak' novel also described vividly of the beauty of nature. Where the trees, plants, the beauty of the forest in the rays of the sun sets, to spread the smell of wildflowers in the evening air, the sweetness voice of birds, beauty of the greeny forest are presented.

2.3 Depiction of love

The depiction of love is another aspect of both novelists. Babar has a love affair with three women in Malik's novel 'Rupabarir Palax'. On the other hand, in Malik's novel 'Xurujmukhir Swapna', Gulash also has a love affair with three women – Senimai, Kopahi and Tara.

In the same way, Bibhutibhushan's novel 'Pather Pachalii'. There is a hint of love between Harihar and Sarvajaya's prime of life. After marrying Sarvajaya, Harihar, who had been in exile for ten years, returned home. He has present his father-in-law's house to restart his family life with Sarvajaya who spent in his father house after marriage. When he presents the house he was not recognize Sarvajaya. After realize Harihar reunites with his wife in his own home.

2.4 Human relations

Human Sympathy, affection for human beings is another feature of the both novelist's novel. In Malik's novel 'Xurujmukhir Swapna' Gulash has donated money for the construction of a school house as well as a donation his land to see the people of Dalim village. At his own expense, he took Senimai's husband to the Golaghat hospital.

In the novel 'Rupabarir Palax' Sharif (the village officer) sheltered Babar and gave him love like his own child. Babar shelters the orphan – Mariyam and Muslima in his house. Apart from this, financial assistance was also provided to the people of the village, to helping the sick Kamran despite the hostility are the obvious signs of humanity.

In the Bandopadhyay novel 'Pather Pachalii' Nilmoni assisted Sarvajaya by calling the doctor while Durga got fever. Village people gave shelter to lonely Indir Thakrun and also they built a house for her. It reflects humanity of the society in the novel.

2.5 Reflection of the cultural aspects

i) This is an another aspect to consider in the novels of Malik and Bondopadhyay. In Malik's novel 'Rupabarir Palax' the rules and regulations of Muslims festival such as descriptions of Milad publicly in the mosque of Rupabari village, Eidbakrid celebrated in Mymensingh villages, song concerts, Magrib Azan, reading Fazar Namaz (Prayer); Maulvi Chahab doing was during the 'Chinni' in the village, to tell about the religion Mourning is the graves of the dead; on the day of Eid, the children wear new clothes and the poor people aspects are also mentions in the novel 'Rupabarir Palax'.

On the other hand, the novel 'Pather Pachalii' reveals the festivals which celebrated in Bengali society such as – Mansa puja, Lakshmi puja, Kulchandibrata, Charak puja and the accompanying arrival of Yatravinaya; fasting by girls by girls in Shiva puja, bridal wears red saree on the wedding customarily etc.

ii) Both novelists are to give a hint of the prevailing folk belief in the society. In the Muslim society, people consider some diseases as a shadow of an evil spirit which is called Jindeev and they must read 'Darud' by that person who suffers from this disease and also give him an armet to protect from the spirit. This folk belief is described in the novel 'Rupabarir Palax' of the Syed Abdul Malik.

In the same way, the novel 'Xurujmukhir Swapna' reveals the treatment of diseases by a barber; exorcism, to talk about the luck by sawing hands, to find out the lost iteams by diviners etc.

On the other hand, Bibhutibhushan's novel 'Pather Pachalii' also reflects the folk beliefs which are prevailing the Bengali society. People can fulfill any desire by talking the vulture's egg in their mouth after putting in the middle of the egg. People believed the Gods do bunch when lightening, Hari's mother took a talisman from a monk and give it to Hari, considering that Biru Rai's misdeeds would be a curse to never live the eldest son of their dynasty.

2.6 Psychological aspects

i. The expression of male psychology exists in both novelists' novel. The man's attitude towards women is evident in Babar's character in the novel 'Rupabarir Palax'. Babar draw an image of the three women in his mind-mariyam, Muslima and Rani. He could not reject any women from them. After marrying Rani, Babar became addicted to Mulsima and Mariyam also. The novel 'Xurujmukhir Swapna' also expresses the sexual desire of a man through the character of Gulash.

On the other hand, in Bandopadhyay's novel, the mentality of male is revealed through the character of Harihar.

Every time Harihar searches for livelihood in everyone and then when he returns home he provides his children with necessities, books etc; he thinks about Durga's marriage and to tries his best to educate Apu like a father's duty for their children.

ii) The expression of female psychology exists in both novelists. In Malik's novel 'Rupabarir Palax', women suspect their lovers, which is expressed in novel clearly through Mariyam, Muslima and Rani.

In the novel Bandopadhyay, the various aspects of the female psychology have been included in the novel and the various aspects of women's emotions have taken place of the novel. The form of women's eternal mother is clearly revealed through the character of Sarvajaya to seeing Sarvajaya's daughter – Durga and auntis love, she started to envy Indir Thakrun. Sarvajaya jealous of Indir for their love which is rooted in mother hood.

2.7 Distinct direction of the novelists

i) In Malik's novel 'Rupabarir Palax' deals with the terrible situation of World War II and the political situation that led to the partition of India and Pakistan.

ii) The expression of sexual psychology is also predominant in Malik's novel.

iii) Bibhutibhushan's novel describes the placidity form of nature. On the other hand, in Malik's novel, nature's calm aesthetic as well as destructive forms are reflected.

iv) Bibhutibhushan's method of composition of novels is in spoken language rather than Bengali.

v) The analysis of child psychology is the main subject of Bibhutibhushan's novel. On the other hand, the position of child character in Malik's novel in secondary.

3. Conclusion

The main purpose of the topic was to find the theme and to reveal the universality, uniqueness of the novel by considering its features. It is possible to know the comparative study of this topic which reflects the social, economical condition and cultural aspects of the 20th and 21st centuries, as well as the horrors of World War II and Its impact on contemporary Bengali and Assamese society. Because the Novel reflects contemporary reality of the societies.

Both novelists have presented Assamese and Bengali society to the readers with their own talent. The two novelities have given priority to rural life over urban life in the novel. The nature has played a major role in Bibhutibhushan's novel. The characters occupy a prominent place and the natures occupy a secondary place in Malik's novel. The psychological aspects of child are prevailing in Bibhutibhushan's novel. The Expression of sexual psychology is predominant in Malik's Novel. Some of the novelists have the style of narrating like simple, immersive garrulous. Both Novelists reflect the suffering of the middle class exploited by the rich, privileged class of society as well as the position of woman in contemporary society between 20th to 21st centuries. In cultural aspects, Malik's Novel reveals the rule and regulation of Muslim society, on the other hand Bibhutibhushan's Novel reveals the festivals of Bengali society clearly.

In this study, "The Novels of Syed Abdul Malik and Bibhutibhushan Bondopadhyay : A Comparative Study" has not been discussed in detail in terms of some aspects such as – political , economical etc. Therefore, it is possible to study this topic in detail in the future.

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