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Dr. Rekha Borthakur  
Dr. Ranjit Kumar Gam

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### *From the desk of the Editor*

Sibsagar College, located on the bank of the historic tank, popularly known as Joysagar Pukhuri, dug in memory of Ahom princess Sati Joymati, is celebrating year-long Platinum Jubilee from 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021 to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2022. It was the year of India's independence in which the college was established and since then, the college has been emitting light in order to illuminate the society with new light and colour. The Journal of Frontline Research, Vol. 10-A is a special edition on Social Science and Humanities published as a part of Platinum Jubilee Celebration of the college. Humans, cultures, and societies are studied in the domain of humanities and social sciences. Social science takes an objective stance based on research and scientific evidence while the humanities take a critical-thinking or opinion-based approach on the rudimentations of human behaviour and camaraderie. Thus, promotion and realization of a society's vision and mission hugely rely on the humanities and social sciences and their subjective constitution as a whole.

This Platinum Jubilee special edition of the Journal has made a sincere effort to publish new ideas and research papers which have utmost relevance in the working and development of various aspects of humanities and social sciences.

Dr. Rekha Borthakur

Dr. Ranjit Kumar Gam

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## A Study of Power Dynamics in Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* with Particular Reference to Female Characters

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### Abstract

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens is a bildungsroman with exceptionally strong women throughout its premise. These women are far ahead of their times- they are portrayed as heads of households, financially independent, well-recognized, strong characters but irony lies in this victimhood of these women even in the powerful position they enjoy. The novel doesn't portray many graceful women who are usually seen to be a spirit of Victorian Womanhood. Dickens perplexes us in a way- did he do good by letting women gain agency in his book or did he show the downfall of this agency? Another unintended effect of this book was a subtle try at 'Killing the angel in the house' in form of Biddy who isn't as nice as she appears to be on the surface.

Even with all the power vested upon these women, somehow, they are all bad people and suffer ultimate justice in the course of time. This similar justice system doesn't seem to work for the men as they get away with all the cruel things they do. This is an honest portrayal of the society- being a woman is an act of resistance, it doesn't matter what we do or say, the question mark always ends at us. Can Dickens be called a feminist for portraying women that do not confine to domestic ideals? Or is he just a regular women-hater who felt disadvantaged or threatened with respect to women and decided to create a dark image of them all?

This paper attempts to study the social, financial and emotional power dynamics of women in Great Expectations. It also attempts to draw comparison between the role of men and women in the novel.

**Keywords:** Women, Dynamics, Powerful.

### 1. Introduction

Great Expectations by Charles Dickens is a bildungsroman with exceptionally strong women throughout its premise. These women are far ahead of their times- they are portrayed as heads of households, financially independent, well-recognized,

strong characters but irony lies in this victimhood of these women even in the powerful position they enjoy. It did not have too many graceful women who are usually seen to be a spirit of Victorian Womanhood. Dickens perplexes us in a way- did he do good by letting women gain

agency in his book or did he show the downfall of this agency? Another unintended effect of this book was a subtle try at 'Killing the angel in the house' in form of Biddy who isn't as nice as she appears to be on the surface.

The women of Great Expectations are all victims of the circumstances they are put in- Mrs Joe was an orphan who had to marry below her means after losing family, Ms Havisham was a bride left at the altar, Estella was a ploy of Ms Havisham's revenge plot and Molly was convicted for murdering resulting in her serving Mr Jaggers throughout her lifetime. Among all these inherently cruel and villainous women is the Moral Compass of the Novel- the sweet, angelic Biddy. In Dickens' world, the greatest expectation you can have as a woman in order to not die or live miserably is to please and think about everyone but yourself. Biddy comes closest to checking all these boxes but isn't quite there for which I applaud Dickens!

Mrs Joe Gargery is Pip's elder sister and the closest to a mother figure in his life. After their parents and siblings died, Mrs Joe bought up Pip 'by hand' and boy does she ever let us forget this! She is a tyrannical young woman and metaphorically the 'man of the house'- she is physically and verbally abusive towards her naïve husband and younger brother; she desperately cooks and cleans all day long and maintains decorum in the house. Since she married below her means due to the loss of her family, that constant frustration is seen in everything she does and it probably explains her harsh

behaviour towards her husband since that was a very unlikely familial scenario for that time. She repeatedly expresses this resentment in complaints like 'Perhaps if I warn't a blacksmith's wife, and (what's the same thing) a slave with her apron never off, I should have been to hear the Carols" (Dickens 23). We can also sympathise with the fact that she was burdened with the responsibility of her younger brother at such a tender age which led her into a compromising marriage as a means to survive with no children of her own. While Dickens presents her in the worst of lights as a mother, he also gives us a decent backstory to her sorrows, thus helping the readers sympathise with her on some level irrespective of her abusive nature. She was unquestionably a bad person, but that shouldn't necessarily be linked to her womanhood. One cannot be sure whether Dickens paved a path for women to exist as people or simply create characters like Mrs Joe so that they could be hated.

Her character drastically alters after the accident of Volume I, Chapter XVI- she is attacked by an unknown person who we all narrow down to be Orlick. She becomes a weak-woman unable to do anything until her ultimate demise and thus justice is served-she pays for all her misdeeds in a gruesome manner. Dickens seems to hate mothers and he equally seems to love being the one punishing them for their behaviour. A parallel serving of justice is also seen in Ms Havisham's case that shall be discussed in the paper later.

Biddy is mostly a unidimensional character in the novel- we don't know a lot

about her except that she is exceptionally nice at the first glance. When and if you manage to spare her a second glance (which might be difficult provided the lack of charm in her character), you will observe undertones of greed and jealousy. She is disappointed when Pip lands in fortune- is it JUST because she thinks money isn't synonymous to happiness or is it because she can see her happiness in the form of Pip slipping away from her entirely? Her dismissal of Pip's desire for Estella doesn't seem to stem from the care one might have for a friend but rather a lover. It is undeniable that Bidley desired Pip even though Pip mostly had platonic feelings for her. While it might be harsh to entirely call her unidimensional, all the sides that we see of her are dedicated to others- the confidant for Pip, the caretaker for Mrs Joe and later Mr Joe when she ends up marrying him. That marriage and kids is a supposed reward that Dickens seems to have given Bidley for being an angelic, righteous person throughout the novel. Bidley leaves me with questions that I shall leave for you here- While people claim that Bidley is a voice of Conscience, isn't it true that no one is THAT nice? What is Bidley if not a perfect example of a settler in the name of happiness?

Another minor but fairly impactful character in the novel is Mr Jaggers' housemaid – Molly. She is seemingly very obedient. It is pointed to us that she has very strong hands which seems to be a fore-show of what is going to be the great revelation in the end. The manner in which Pip describes her also hints towards the

same- phrases like 'diseased affection of the heart' and 'curious expression of suddenness' adds an undertone of mystery to the plot. As the story unfolds, she is exposed as a murderer who serves as Jaggers' housemaid as a form of punishment. It might be controversial but the friction between Molly and Jaggers or the way he forced her hands out, hence hinting that he keenly observes her might be an indication of her being his mistress as well. We don't hear her talk a lot but what we do see is pure and sacrificial motherly love towards her daughter Estella when she decides to give her up to Ms Havisham. Ironically, she is the 'most-motherly mother' in the entire novel even in her absence.

Estella is Molly and Magwitch's daughter who was given up for adoption under gruel circumstances in the best of her interests (I wonder how that turned out!). She is a victim with no clue of her victimhood for most of the part. In order to shed light on that, I shall be introducing Ms Havisham (finally!) since these two characters are very deeply interlinked.

In my opinion, Dickens' introduction of Ms Havisham in Chapter 8 is the most impactful of all. Even with all that we know of her, she is as much an enigma throughout. It isn't surprising for Pip to be allured by her personality. Dickens' portrayal of her is unrealistic, there is no second thought in that statement. The stagnancy with which she leads her life is impossible to achieve, it is almost as if she were a witch. The fact that she is presented

as completely broken and yet so intimidating is very impressive.

Ms Havisham comes off as a cruel lady scheming the most pointless of revenges in bitterness. This arc gives a clear indication that Dickens doesn't understand women at all. The manner in which Ms Havisham is portrayed to have stopped time and taken a path of self-destruction for a man who couldn't seem to care less is very telling of Dickens' self-absorbed nature.

Estella is the making of Ms Havisham- the way she talks or thinks, her motives and goals in life are all consciously or unconsciously influenced by Ms Havisham. I sympathise with her on a number of aspects but most importantly due to the fact that she was unable to meet her real mother Molly who loved her so dearly. I feel that would have made Estella a kinder person.

Estella symbolises female sexuality in the novel- she has no desires of her own but she is desired by many. Estella has grown to enjoy this attention while making sure she is inaccessible. Pip describes this in Chapter 29, "the air of inaccessibility which her beauty and her manner gave her, tormented me in the midst of my delight, and at the height of the assurance I felt that our patroness had chosen us for one another". While the rest of his assumption wasn't true, Estella is only shown through the lens of Pip. The few things that she says are all under the influence of Ms Havisham. I am not sure if any of us ever got to meet Estella except in the last chapter of the novel perhaps.

Miss Havisham grew up in power and had a lot of authority. She also gave Estella a fairly similar upbringing except the part where she manipulated and forced her own thoughts in young Estella to mould her into a revenge weapon. It can be said without a doubt that Estella would have been a completely different person if not for her. Not only did the readers ever meet Estella, it is a rather sad ordeal that even Estella never got to discover her real self.

The women in this novel are heavily flawed- the flaw doesn't inherently lie within them but rather in the way they are represented. None of these women have a realistic tone to them- they lie in the extremes and are shown to be obsessed with either men or money. Another notable aspect is that the women are confined to specific spaces- Mrs Joe never left the house, Ms Havisham always lived in Satis House, Estella moved between a foreign school and Satis House. Economic strength doesn't come at play here- women stay at homes while men are seen to be moving around freely.

Another peculiar aspect of this novel is the display of femineity in men. Mr Joe is the closest to a caring and feminine face in Pip's life. Pip's presence in Magwitch's later years in life also shows a hint of feminine care. When it comes to Women in Great Expectations, they are all strong and have a voice which isn't inherently synonymous to these characters being feminists! They are self-centred, unsympathetic and cruel except for Biddy whose character is not in parallels with feminism. Mr Jaggers might as well be

talking about most of the women throughout the novel when he said ‘Very few men have the power of wrist that this woman has.’ (Chapter 24) Dickens has created two boxes for women- you are either mean and cruel or angelic to the point that you forget yourself in order to gain everyone’s approval.

The women here are somehow all bad people and suffer ultimate justice in the course of time. This similar justice system doesn’t seem to work for the men as they get away with all the cruel things they do. This is an honest portrayal of the society- being a woman is an act of resistance, it doesn’t matter what we do or say, the question mark always ends at us. Can Dickens be called a feminist for portraying

women that do not confine to domestic ideals? Or is he just a regular women-hater who felt disadvantaged with respect to women and decided to create a dark image of them all? Whatever Dickens intended to do; he did end up portraying deeply flawed women who enjoyed acceptance in the society which is very unlikely for the Victorian Period. In a way, he also killed the ‘angel in the house’ in the form of Biddy by the undercurrent of meanness that she possessed. Perhaps, Dickens just never had enough understanding of women but the portrayal of such aggressive and powerful female characters in a highly regarded serial of that period must have been a strong statement in itself.

## References

- [1] Woolf, Virginia. *Killing the Angel in the House: Seven Essays*. London: Penguin Books, 1995. Print.

## Reading Political Commentary in Literature from Northeast India: an Analysis of Aruni Kashyap's *the House with a Thousand Stories*

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### Abstract

Political fiction is essentially the literature of which the narratives critically comment on political systems, the concerned theories of politics, and maybe even society. Basically, pleasure is not the only thing that it provides. Information and awareness of the spatial and temporal aspects of the story, and incentive to question structures need to come along.

Within this purview of political fiction, Aruni Kashyap and his writing in particular, and writers from Northeast India and their writings in general, can be studied. The region has had a volatile history and the people have been undoubtedly scarred to varying degrees. Such a political situation finds its way to people's expressions and discourse creations. Literature being just those, as well as the quintessential mirror to a society, cannot help but report on such volatile systems and political situations. This can be intentional or not because otherwise the settings would seem hollow and the characters' lives non-convincing. Furthermore, there is almost always an unspoken sort of responsibility of such 'reporting'. Aruni Kashyap is no exception, and to show this, this author will present a study of a novel of his titled *The House with a Thousand Stories*.

For this qualitative study, a textual analysis of Kashyap's novel will be tried. Power, and Ideological State Apparatus and Repressive State Apparatus, concepts by Althusser, will form the theoretical framework for this research.

**Keywords:** Political fiction, Aruni Kashyap, Power, ISA, RSA

### 1. Introduction

Assam is politically extremely sensitive, with everyone having certain personal or familial memory traumas. Obviously, no one finds it easy to forget their past traumatic memories, both personal and public, and thus, one finds it quite difficult to look at things and life through a simplistic lens and simply appreciate the

beauties that surround him/her in this land. *Stories* aimed at making posterity more rooted to their land and more patriotic by knowing its history transmit these memories from one generation to the next even if the latter has not experienced 'that' Assam.

Till well into the 2010s in fact it was more than common to hear about

blockages, bandhs, chakka bandhs etc. quite regularly and sometimes, even in a series of continuous days. Businesses suffered, education became an issue, and people's daily lives were hampered. People would be afraid on every Independence Day and Republic Day, thinking where bomb blasts might happen that year.

When one is from such a land it is exceedingly difficult for him/her to alienate from all the incidents and situations all around and not have any opinions. More so, when one is a writer. When they write stories based in various parts Assam and inevitably report on the situations in order to make readers understand well the milieu that the characters come from, some sort of commentary is definitely made. And that is exactly what makes their writings political.

For a working definition, political fiction could be the fictional literature that uses its narrative to comment on political systems, political theories, and society even. It is meant to inspire, possibly effecting change, bringing attention to a cause, or putting out a call to action.

Aruni Kashyap is essentially a political writer. He stays in the US but sets most of his stories in Assam, and that makes it obvious that Assam's milieu would be a constant presence.

## **2. Thesis Statement**

The House with a Thousand Stories is political in nature, in which the author comments on the systems of the places that he sets his novels in, while forwarding the narrative.

## **3. Primary Text**

The House with a Thousand Stories was written by Aruni Kashyap, and published by Penguin Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House, in 2013.

## **4. Research Questions and Objectives**

This research will attempt answering how Kashyap has commented on the situations and the systems without letting go of the narration of the plot.

This paper will further seek to identify hierarchical power structures and what role state apparatuses play in the novel and explore Aruni Kashyap's style of commenting on political situations, intentionally or otherwise, in the storytelling flow.

## **5. Methods and Methodology**

A qualitative and textual analysis of the novel will be done as part of this research.

The theories to be looked at would be the ideas of Power, and of Ideological State Apparatus and Repressive State Apparatus, one to force behaviour in people and the other to coerce via ideologies.

## **6. Analysis**

In the paper "Places, People, and Fear: A Study of the Building of Settings in Aruni Kashyap's *The House with a Thousand Stories*", this researcher looked at how in the concerned novel Aruni Kashyap presented a comprehensive and deep picture of the environment of fear prevalent in the settings, i.e., Hatimura and Teteliguri mostly, and Guwahati too. But all of those pointers that paint a vivid and comprehensive picture of the situations in the physical spaces in which the plot of the



novel is unfolding have been commented on by the writer, subtly or otherwise, without harming the coherence of the narration but interlaced. Pablo does ‘find(s) first love’ and does ‘discover(s) family intrigues’ as the back cover synopsis of the book states, but not distanced from the violence and bloodshed.

At a certain point in the novel, Pablo and Mridul are sitting on the banks of the Brahmaputra discussing the various members of Mridul’s family, when a jeep carrying Army jawans passes them. Pablo looks at them and wonders ‘what they must be thinking about our river, our sunset, our skies, our village, our songs, our chatter, our walls, the sound of our looms, our birds, our dust.’ (Kashyap 92) The sentence clearly shows the excessive use of ‘our’, a tool to assert his belongingness to the place and the ‘alien’ status of those men. But even his belongingness is not as simple as it looks. He does not truly belong. He is a boy from Guwahati with roots in Teteliguri village and his paternal grandmother was a daughter of Hatimura. He is no doubt extremely close to Mridul and quite enjoys spending time in their house, even though as a child Oholya jethai would scare him out of his wits, but he does not ‘live’ there. He can be taken away at the slightest of inconvenience to him. Hiren’s family’s massacre was in no way slight, but nevertheless his very worried parents took him away and he too did not wish to stay. But his grandmother’s family in Hatimura have nowhere else to go to. He does not even know so many of the things that transpired in that village, and Mridul

could keep secrets from him if he wanted to. He basically did not ‘own’ the information as a boy from the village did, he had to get it from somewhere. He left for Delhi for his further studies and had dreams even of America, and later became a professor in Delhi. But Prosanto da could not leave that easily. So, he does not know a lot of struggles of living in that village. The only way he shows a sense of ownership over all those things, even a loom which he would hardly spot in Guwahati, is by his identity of being Assamese. That is how the binary worked then; one speaks Assamese as his mother tongue, he/she is one’s own, others are not.

Kashyap also comments on the fear that the SULFAs had of their previous comrades, which by extension, everyone in the vicinity would have because even if one is not the person attacked it is no way not scary to witness an attack or live amidst such incidents. The ULFA’s anger sort of makes sense too, without taking away from the scariness of it all. Kashyap explains well; ‘While the ULFA suffered from jaundice, malaria, mokhlong fever, hunger, rain, sun and malnutrition, fighting for the cause of Assam’s independence from India, the SULFA basked in their wealth. No wonder the ULFA wanted to kill them.’ (11)

It is interesting to note that a representation of the government of the times is visible throughout the novel. Oholyabai/jethai is easily the most authoritative figure in the novel and can be viewed as a metaphor for the government. She seeks, never to protect, but to control



the people and somehow never lose her position. 'Oholya-jethai was not someone who liked to be contradicted. She was used to being listened to. She was used to nodding heads' (14). She controls and punishes (in a different way) people. When she got to know about Mridul taking Pablo to eat pork, she not only admonishes Mridul by quoting in Sanskrit that smelling food is akin to half eating (meaning he has as good as eaten the pork, although he physically has not), she also insults him by telling an open secret out loud for people to relish and one that Pablo did not need to know- that Mridul's father Bolen had an affair with the wine-brewer where he overdrank wine, rightly pointed out in the Ph.D. thesis 'Conflicts and Their Effects in Assam and Meghalaya: A Study of the Select Works of Anjum Hasan, Siddhartha Deb, Aruni Kashyap, Bijoya Sawian and Mitra Phukan' (Manimekalai 107). But when Mridul retaliates, after she realises that her efforts at subduing him are not working anymore, she plays the victim, screaming to the 'raiz', meaning community, dramatically:

Not a month has gone by since my brother's death and his children are treating this unmarried woman like garbage. What will happen to me! Such injustice! ... Meenu, take me away from here. I am sure there will be some place in your cowshed. ... Gulapi, will you ask your husband to make me a hut at the back of your house near the toilet or near the garbage dump? ... I devoted my life to this house, to these children, this family, but I should have hung myself ... than listen to such abuses

from my own brother's children. ... His children are treating this helpless old woman like this! Where are you Bolen? Why did you leave me? ... (100-101)

Interestingly enough she has suddenly turned into a 'helpless old woman', and more interestingly she wants protection from the same brother who she abused just the previous night. This shows the hypocrisy and chameleon-like ways of the people in authoritative positions. And people were supposed to be afraid of them that is how they conducted themselves.

Noteworthy is what Moina says, 'Eeeh, I really would have liked to go on my own to invite you all. But that big gate, the security guard! I feel really scared to go to your house. Feels as if I am entering the house of some minister-sinister. Eeeh!' (Kashyap 78) Commoners were actually afraid of ministers and other politicians, especially the villagers, though they were simply MLAs and MPs who got some offices for labour divisions, and the MLAs and MPs in turn are no more than people's representatives, who as people would be neighbours and family members, just like the ULFA boys the people did not fear much. Politicians maintained that fear psychosis. But they too were not invincible and non-replaceable.

One sees how when Oholya becomes distressed and retreats to her room with so much to do in a house with a marriage coming up, Okoni, her younger sister who had married nearby takes over easily. 'How soon things got replaced. How soon the grass grew back on the ground. How soon the yellow sun-denied grass became

green once the brick was removed from it. How soon life moved on' (Kashyap 169) and 'Mridul... obeyed her as much as he obeyed his mother' (Kashyap 170) show how 'People, at some point, are satisfied with alternate support systems.' (Manimekhalai 150). On the same note, Prodip and Deepali portray the opposition (opposes her views and orders), and Mridul and Prosanto stand for the rebellions (have 'scandalous' love interests and love stories) that a government faces.

This is the sort of analysis of representation and metaphor that this researcher could infer from the greatly packed novel penned by Kashyap. These instances show his skill of incorporating

serious political commentary in a very coherent plot narration with a lot of characters, who are all equally complex, thus deserving of deep literary attention.

## 7. Conclusion

Tying up all that has been said one can reiterate that just as he quite comprehensively described the atmosphere of fear in the settings of his novel *The House with a Thousand Stories* (Baruah), Aruni Kashyap commented poignantly on the systems too while forwarding the narrative deftly. With the aforementioned arguments validated with the help of the text, the thesis statement of this paper is proven. Aruni Kashyap's novel is, indeed, political in nature.

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## The Letters of T. S. Eliot: An Exquisite Instrument to Understand the Poet's Self

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### Abstract

The aim of this paper is to explore a relatively uncharted aspect of T.S. Eliot's life and career i.e. his letters. In an obvious way, letters are always instrumental in exploring the deepest part of man's life since they are the most intense and personal chunk of communication. Eliot, during his life time, had innumerable correspondence which can be categorically studied as official, non-official, secret and so on. Apart from exposing his most profound pain and suffering airing out of his marital life with Vivienne, they also reflect upon his plan and idea of composing some legendary poems. Most poignantly his correspondence with Emily Hale, whom he met in 1912, reunited in 1927 and corresponded for decades seems to be most important in this regard. She appeared to be the poet's oldest friend and his 'secret love, confidant, and muse'. Here it has been attempted to read/reread Eliot with the help of his letters which would hopefully open a new horizon as far as the life of this great literary figure is concerned.

**Keywords:** T.S. Eliot, letter, communication, correspondence.

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### 1. Introduction

T. S. Eliot, the most conspicuous literary figure in the 20th Century literary history of England has been explored from different angles by different scholars/critics. His search for poetic congeniality with Pound, spiritual crisis leading to the ultimate submission to Anglo-Catholicism, personal and family quagmire, the Oriental philosophical and religious influence, anti-Semitic(?) outlook, the gradual swing from conscious craftsmanship to reflective poetry of being, the convergence between his critical,

creative and religious impulses etc. are some of the remarkable aspects that find a place in traditional scholarship and discussion regarding this great scholar.

Many of his writings seem to be a manifestation of his personal life though he was an ardent supporter of impersonality in art. While maintaining the decorum of objectivity, he succeeds in leading the personal crisis to a universal level and there lies his specialty. Though the poem like *The Waste-Land* replicates his personal crisis and thereby allows one to glimpse at his conjugal life with Vivienne,

there is another potent instrument to unmask his inner self i.e. his letters penned down during different periods of his life. In this regard, we have to be thankful to his second wife Valerie Eliot, who during her lifetime edited a series of it in support of Faber and Faber.

There is a total of nine volumes of letters available for the reading public that spans the period from his childhood to the later period of his life. Apart from his correspondence with different people, some rare photographs portraying his early childhood, school life, intimate moment with Vivienne etc. enhance the dignity of the volumes.

The first collection that appeared in 1988 encompasses the letters during his childhood till the year 1922. Thus some important aspects of his life such as his schooling in St. Louis, shifting to England, Marriage to Vivienne, and most importantly the publication of *The Waste Land* etc. come within the purview. However, an enlarged and revised edition of the same appeared again later on, since Valerie collected a lot of correspondence by visiting different libraries, offices etc. in both Britain and America.

The exquisite mental anxiety and barrenness arising out of his inability to produce something great have been perfectly mapped in the letters included in the second volume. However another correlated aspect i.e. his preparation for conversion to Anglo-Catholicism and his correspondence with his mother regarding family matters are also a part in the second volume.

Subsequently, volume three covers the period from 1926 to 1927, a conspicuous period in his life where the agnostic Eliot transmutes into Anglo-Catholicism. Some of the vital coverage of those letters are- personal and artistic transformation during these crucial years, the continuing anxieties of his private life, and weakening of his public reputation etc.

Volume four (1928-29) keeps a balance between his personal and official correspondence ranging from his weighty responsibility as a husband to the most demanding editor and publisher of the time.

On the other hand, volume five (1930-31) manifests his personal life to a great extent the chief among them is the changed relationship with several persons like Virginia Woolf, Herbert Read etc. to number a few because of his conversion, his growing estrangement from his wife Vivienne etc.

The sixth volume (1932-33) records the period which in the poet's own voice is "the happiest I can ever remember in my life." these letters expose Eliot's ultimate resolution to end his troublesome eighteen-year marriage to his wife, Vivienne at one level and captivating descriptions of the author's encounters with F. Scott Fitzgerald, Edmund Wilson, Marianne Moore, and other notable figures.

If the Seventh Volume (1934-35) enables one to understand the success that the author had earned as a stage dramatist, the Eighth one (1936-38) largely concerns his professional life both as editor and publisher since then he had already earned

universal recognition. At a personal level, it too draws upon the consequence of his separation from Vivien leading up to commit her to an asylum

The volume Nine (1939-41) was made public in 2021. It encapsulates the correspondence related with the production of his plays, publication of *The Idea of a Christian Society*. Major correspondents include W. H. Auden, George Barker, William Empson, Geoffrey Faber, John Hayward, James Laughlin, Hope Mirrlees, Mervyn Peake, Ezra Pound, Michael Roberts, Stephen Spender, Tambimuttu, Allen Tate, Michael Tippett, Charles Williams and Virginia Woolf. In this volume, the poet abundantly shares his ideas on *Four Quartets*.

The most remarkable among the letters of Eliot is his correspondence with Emily Hale, whom he met in 1912, reunited in 1927, and corresponded for decades. She appeared to be the poet's oldest friend and his 'secret love, confidant, and muse'. Eliot's impression towards her could be understood through his own words: "I fell in love with Emily Hale in 1912 when I was in the Harvard Graduate School. Before I left for Germany and England in 1914 I told her that I was in love with her. I have no reason to believe, from the way in which this declaration was received, that my feelings were returned, in any degree whatever. We exchanged a few letters, on a purely friendly basis, while I was up at Oxford during 1914-15....."

Elsewhere he said: "my love for Emily was the love of a ghost for a ghost, and that the letters I had been writing to her were

the letters of a hallucinated man, a man vainly trying to pretend to himself that he was the same man that he had been in 1914."

Interestingly, Hale donated all the 1131 correspondences from T. S. Eliot dating from 1930 to 1956, to The Princeton University Library with a kind of agreement with the library that letters be kept "completely closed to all readers until the lapse of fifty years after the death of Mr Eliot or myself, whichever shall occur later." However initially, she made the agreement that the letters not to be opened or published until 25 years after her death. But she, later on, changed her mind and extended it to up to fifty years after the death of Mr Eliot or herself, whichever would occur later. Subsequently, Eliot died in 1965 and Hale in 1969. Thus the official opening of the largest single series of Eliot's correspondence and among the best-known sealed literary archives in the world was on 2 January 2020. However, they are still restricted to reading room consultation only due to copyright law since they are under copyright with The T.S. Estate.

The letters obviously will enable one to know in detail about Eliot's relationship with his wife and others; his life as a poet, playwright, literary critic, and editor. Though a lot has been studied about Eliot, some of his personal matters like his inability to lead the relationship with Hale to marriage after the demise of Vivienne despite having several reciprocations. His deep-rooted love for Hale is adequately manifested in his more philosophical poem

The Four Quartets where expressions like 'what might have been' is an abstraction...Remaining a perpetual possibility only in a world of speculation' reminds that unfulfilled desire. Interestingly, the interest was not one-sided since there were a number of reciprocations from Hale with the same warmth and passion. Apart from that, the letters also help us know about the progression of the writer's aesthetic

perceptions, his visionary spirit apart from providing biographical information. Throughout his career, Eliot had the desire to transcend the periphery of the individual self to a universal one. The letters help us to estimate how painful it was on his part to transmute it through a poetic vision. It is hoped that his letters will help to open a new dimension towards the life and reality of this great writer.

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## Kitchen at the Borderlands: Negotiating the Domestic in a Gendered Diaspora

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### Abstract

How does the kitchen – which has been a space of repression, containment and abuse, and also one of intergenerational female bonding, community-building and an alternative space of agency – translate, move and revise its affordances and limitations for the woman when placed in the diaspora? How does it shift the relationship of the diasporic woman to the homeland? In this essay, I explore these questions in the context of the South Asian diaspora as depicted in domestic fiction by diasporic women authors Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni and Kamila Shamsie which portray the intimate and contentious relationship between the kitchen and the protagonist starting out in an unfamiliar land/ returning ‘home’. Written at the turn of the 20th century post the 1980s surge in South Asian (im)migration, these stories of movements across nations, cultures, and memories prompt diasporic meditations on ‘home’, intimacy, and domestic labour in the face of changing spatial, regional, and territorial affiliations. In doing so, I’d read these stories alongside Gayatri Gopinath’s re-negotiation of the boundaries of diaspora to move beyond the understanding of diaspora as nation-to-nation and redefine it as a regional displacement and emplacement (Unruly Visions, 2018). When the diasporic lens is thus narrowed to a more emotionally-inflected regional movement, memory and belonging become further complicated due to emphatic investments of class, caste, language, religion and family, especially in South Asia where these regional affiliations have a specific history of violence and trauma.

**Keywords:** diaspora, gender, memory, domestic.

### 1. Introduction

When does a place of residence become ‘home’? For those whose lives are “marked by diasporic inscriptions” (Brah 1), this question is a bodied and intimate inquiry that is entangled with “regional”<sup>1</sup>

memory, and socio-political and cultural aspirations. There is a tension between an emotional affiliation to the homeland and a socio-political affiliation to the adoptive

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emplacement (See Unruly Visions 2019) which has been a strong influence in my reading of diasporic narratives. I will go on to engage with her conception of a region-diaspora in greater detail later on in the essay.

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<sup>1</sup>This is from Gayatri Gopinath’s redefinition of diaspora as a regional displacement and



country, and one of the vectors of the emotional attachment to ‘home’ is food. In the South Asian diaspora, investment in food is inextricably linked to the labour of women. One has to only browse through South Asian cookbooks and food memoirs by emigrant cooks and writers, men and women, to find telling titles such as *Cooking Like Mummyji* or *Cooking with My Indian Mother-in-Law*. The latter, co-written by a white man with his Indian mother-in-law, invokes the matrilineal knowledge of desi<sup>2</sup> cooking purporting to teach readers “the Art of Authentic Home Cooking” (the subtitle of the book). Thus, ‘home’ and women’s knowledge / skills are as definitively interwoven in the diaspora as they are back ‘home’ – women are made the carriers and bearers of tradition and memory, tasked with the project of establishing and nurturing another ‘home’ in the adoptive land, of which one of the major ways is through their labour in the kitchen.

Thus, for women, the question of when a place becomes ‘home’ is variedly complicated and contentious, *because* ‘home’ has continued to constitute a key site of acute ambivalence, and more so, the kitchen, where women’s work is

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<sup>2</sup>Desi is an umbrella term for the culture and people of South Asia and its diaspora, mostly referring to the countries of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. It is derived from the Sanskrit word देश (pronounced as de-sha), which means homeland, not so much in a political sense though; it evokes an emotional landscape in memory with a connotation of ‘homecoming’.

masqueraded as ‘labour of love’ (Brah 76). At the risk of over-generalizing: while in their ‘original’ households, housework may have been shared among the women in the family, in the adoptive land, a middle class immigrant family would have one woman handling all the housework, providing emotional labour during and after the move, and in most cases, might also be working a job. During Brah’s 1979 study on Asian immigrants and gender division of work (76), one woman noted, “It’s a dog’s life. There are bills after bills to be paid. You wear yourself to the bone with work.” Are they afforded the time and energy to forge their own bonds with shifting space? Since these mothers and wives are engaged in recreating the ‘home’ of memory in the new country for others in the family, when do these women negotiate their own relationship with space? In other words, when does a place become ‘home’ for the woman?

For many South Asian women, the diasporic experience is specifically gendered. Resolution of their contentions and hopes with the new country necessitates a resolution of their ambivalence with ‘home’ and the kitchen. However, for this essay, I read two novels whose protagonists are not housewives or mothers; they move alone across countries and do not bear the responsibility of home-making for others per se. Even so, these protagonists, who do not bear much of the gendered burden of the kitchen-space, negotiate with the diaspora through memories interlaced with food. Food evokes emotion, feminine and feminized

knowledge and magic (in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's *The Mistress of Spices*), and food also exposes conflicts of class, religion and history (as depicted in Kamila Shamsie's *Salt and Saffron*).

Tilo, of *The Mistress of Spices*, is an Indian woman of mysterious origins (apparently class-less and caste-less) who sets up an Indian grocery store in the distressed part of Oakland, California. This shop is a front for a healing practice where Tilo divines the varied maladies, physical, emotional and interpersonal, of her customers and heals them with her spices. Her 'home' in India is shrouded in memories of an all-women region where the Old One taught them the secrets of spices such as of turmeric, lotus root, sesame, makaradwaj, asafoetida and others, the names of which are also the titles of the chapters. In her move to California, it is not mainland India she remembers, but the intimate matrilineal knowledge of this almost transtemporal region. In her introduction to the readers, Tilo says of the magic in spices:

"Yes, they all hold magic, even the everyday American spices you toss unthinking into your cooking pot. You doubt? Ah. You have forgotten the old secrets your mother's mothers knew. [...] But the spices of true power are from my birthland, land of ardent poetry, aquamarine feathers, Sunset skies brilliant as blood." (3)

I want to highlight three aspects of Tilo's narrative about herself and her history. First, the narrative begins after she has immigrated to the US, and thus, it

speaks to both America and her birthland, and inhabits a dialogic<sup>3</sup> borderland of sorts; second, she specifically draws on a matrilineal - and thus considered 'authentic' in the diaspora - knowledge of food that transcends spatial and cultural boundaries; and third, she remembers India not so much as a socio-political entity with institutions and national borders, but rather as a space of emotional, cultural and mystical legacy. Divakaruni's story is simple: an Indian woman migrates to the US, sets up a business in California, falls in love with Raven, a handsome American Indian, and builds a new life for herself. Her focus is on the storytelling of a diasporic narrative, and she complicates it by deploying magic realism as a strategy, but also by weaving together the past and present. In an interview on the novel for the *Journal of South Asian Literature* (2000), Divakaruni remarks:

"In terms of my culture...the spices are very ordinary, everyday things. They're very domestic; it is the women who deal with the spices. And yet there is a lot of power in the spices: They have herbal qualities; they have medicinal qualities; they have mythical qualities. These little

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<sup>3</sup>This comes from Mikhail Bakhtin's dialogization (see Discourse in the Novel). I use the word to mean that Tilo's narrative about diaspora is not monologic, that is, it does not speak with authority to just one particular place, but it rather addresses multiple discourses - India as a nation, India as a region that is uniquely hers, America where she has immigrated to, America which she heals one person at a time, and so on.

things like the spices that we think of as domestic, if we use them right, can have a lot of power.” (7)

Divakaruni, herself a diasporic writer, in her memories of India, associates spices with myth, power and the domestic, and thus with women. How do we read an authorial statement such as “spices...have mythical qualities” or “spices...can have a lot of power”? In the rest of the interview, she does not go on to clarify this ‘power’ – does she use it to mean a form of feminine power, a skill of which a woman has sole/superior control of, or does she mean that spices can be made to work in magical ways? The more interesting question for me is to consider whether the spices took on these extra-domestic meanings for Divakaruni when, or rather because, she remembered them from the diaspora. And, if the kitchen continues to be a defining borderland for negotiating the contentious bond with the ‘home’ in flux, then in trying to understand when a place becomes ‘home’ for a woman, it might be productive to think about how the woman tells these diasporic stories about food and how she remembers the intimate kitchen-space left behind.

Aliya of *Salt and Saffron* is a young Pakistani woman studying in the US who returns to Karachi for holidays after four years. She had left home after a climactic family conflict in the midst of which she had slapped her grandmother and has not met her since. The story is one of memory and is narrated through memory: Aliya remembers her family history morsel by morsel, her narration often unreliable, and

she imagines a future beyond the borders of region, class, and history. Aliya’s remembering is often tempered with simultaneous mythologizing and historicizing of relationships and food. The major contention in Aliya’s memory of her ‘home’, apart from her grandmother, is Mariam, her aunt by relationship but her sister in heart, whose origins are a mystery and who only ever spoke to the cook, Masood, to go on to elope with him one day.

“I’d had the opening line of Mariam’s story ready for a long time: In all the years my cousin, Mariam, lived with us she only spoke to order meals. The next line varied, according to my mood. Usually it was: Strictly speaking, she was more aunt than cousin, though I always called her Apa. But when I was feeling more fanciful I sometimes replaced that with: She taught me the textures of silence, the timbres of it, and sometimes even the taste.” (48)

Aliya is constantly critiquing her own narrative and memory, but is also resistant to others’ discourses, especially with respect to either her grandmother or Mariam, and to me, her resistance to alternative versions of history and memory is quite telling of her troubled relationship with ‘home’. In one such moment, Aliya and Samia, her cousin studying in London, are recalling the passed down story of one of their royal ancestors raping a woman who was in his service. Aliya remembers the incident when she had accused the ancestor Nawab of rape in front of her grandmother who immediately defended

him by reciting “Leda and the Swan”<sup>4</sup>. Although they are both initially dismissive and condemnatory of the grandmother’s response, Samia later points out the slippages of meaning within myths – “...in what rash of clairvoyance do we presume Taj’s mother was unwilling?” (16) Aliya turns away, signalling her resistance to this alternative discourse, “Dadi doesn’t understand complexity.” This conversation also enumerates the discontinuities inherent within intergenerational and diasporic knowledge and memories, and highlights the central quest of the story which is to find, and to fail to find, the truth in/ of memories.

Kamila Shamsie, the Pakistani-British author of the novel, in an interview with BBC<sup>5</sup> says of her own relationship with Karachi as akin to “the way that you would love that difficult member of your family”. Aliya exhibits a similar ambivalence to Karachi when she remembers the region from the diaspora, with the added whimsicality of remembering through taste and fragrance of food.

‘Tell me about Karachi.’

I dipped a lump of sugar into my coffee and watched it change colour. He hadn’t said, ‘What’s Karachi like?’ as so many people did, as though they thought I could answer that question with a single,

simple analogy. My stock answer was, ‘Like a chicken.’ (61)

Why need a stock answer about your homeland at all? And, why one that seemingly reduces a whole region reverberating with history and memory to a chicken? In the novel, Aliya does not clarify this answer – she presents it as if it is a self-evident fact of life, or at least, of her narrative. *How would these answers even be legible to others?* Food thus, becomes a very significant marker of a space, not just as a way to remember the taste and smell of it, but it also operates as a characterizing function. For an immigrant man, while distancing himself from the space and labour, it might be the food of mummyji which distinguishes homeland from the adoptive land, for a woman it is the memory of a generational bodied knowledge and a space that they had known in all of its affordances and limitations. Even for Aliya who hails from a family descended from the royals, who had never had to cook for herself and who had grown up seeing a male cook serve food in her house, her memories are never divorced from the kitchen-space because of its associations with her grandmother and Mariam.

“...never, not once, has anyone succeeded in producing a meal that could be mistaken as Masoodian. ‘*Haath mein maza hai,*’ Dadi always said – the delight is in his hand – but perhaps the delight was really in Mariam’s voice. Regardless of cause and effect, what I was saying was that to appreciate the Mariam–Masood Iftaris we had to build

<sup>4</sup>This is a poem by William Butler Yeats which reworks the Ovidian metamorphosis tale of Zeus’rape and impregnation of Leda.

<sup>5</sup>The link to the video interview is not available anymore, but there is an official BBC write-up. See bibliography for the source: Kamila Shamsie: Reimagining a Violent City.

ourselves up to a pitch of hunger that enabled us to sit and eat and eat for an hour and a half without pause.” (74-75)

Food, thus, becomes inextricable from a woman’s memory and narrativization of the diaspora. In many ways, it is through food we remember our mothers and grandmothers, it is through food we remember the smell of our home, and it is through food that we try to build a new home working through the happy as well as the painful memories. In Atima Srivastava’s British Asian novel *looking for Maya* (1999), a character Amrit sneeringly refers to recent South Asian diasporic fiction as “mangoes and coconuts and grandmothers...The Great Immigrant novel”<sup>6</sup>. Graham Huggan contends that “India [desi culture]...is more available than ever for consumption; and more prevalent than ever are the gastronomic images through which the nation is to be consumed” (82). While the centrality of images of food in South Asian diasporic fiction has been noted and mapped out in various ways by scholars of diaspora and food studies<sup>7</sup>, what I am interested in with first-person woman narratives are questions of storytelling – how do women tell stories about the diaspora? And more broadly, how do women tell stories about their lives? - because amidst the inquiries into the politics and the sociology of immigration, we often tend to reduce

personal narratives into data points for qualitative research<sup>8</sup>.

Salt and Saffron is classified as ‘domestic fiction’, which is a term to describe the body of popular literature written by, for and about women that had flourished during the mid-19th century. In another interview in 2007, on being asked if women write differently than men, Shamsie reflects on her books being clubbed under ‘domestic writing’ and rejects such overstatements, but she does note at one point, “Of course, for many years the domestic sphere was seen as a woman's world whereas the battlefield was a man's world.” Readers might club Divakaruni and Shamsie’s novels into the category of domestic fiction or romance by focusing on one strand of their narratives – that both the protagonists, Tilo and Aliya, fall in love and that the narrative ends with a (re)affirmation of the relationship – and dismissing the issues of diaspora, self-space dynamics, partition memories, class conflicts. Divakaruni and Shamsie seem to subvert precisely such notions about women’s narratives by using trope plots to offer unique insights into the nature of diaspora and ‘home’. Shamsie also conflates the domestic and the battlefield

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<sup>6</sup>Quoted in Maxey 2011, 1.

<sup>7</sup>See the scholarship of Supriya Nair, Anita Munnur, Arjun Appadurai, and AvtarBrah.

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<sup>8</sup>Gopinath gives us an alternative to data as is understood in qualitative and quantitative research – warm data, which would suffuse subjects and data with affect and subjectivity. It is a term coined by artists Chitra Ganesh & Mariam Ghani to refer to “the realms of the sensorial and the affective that are effaced by the US state's attempt to locate and "fix" South Asian and Middle Eastern men as potential terrorist threats” (Quoted in Gopinath 2019).

of the past, the 1947 partition of India<sup>9</sup>, to present a quirky story recasting the diaspora as an emotional battlefield waged through metaphors of food.

Gayatri Gopinath in *Unruly Visions* introduces the concept of a “regional imaginary” (5) and challenges standard ideas of diaspora that foregrounds the nation. She instead proposes a region of relationality as the reference point for diaspora and redefines it as a regional displacement and emplacement. When the diasporic lens is thus narrowed to the region, memory and belonging become further complicated due to emphatic investments of class, caste, language, religion and family, especially in South Asia where these regional affiliations have a specific history and ongoing realities of violence and trauma. While Gopinath’s project is more geared towards what she calls “queering the archive” and the diaspora, in this essay, I use region-diaspora to think about gendered diaspora because the region in these first-person women’s narratives is additionally and specifically inflected with memories of food and intimate spaces.

In Tilo’s uniquely internalized belief-system which is largely situated in a mystical orientalized region, “her spices cohere with greater powers in the universe to steer reality away from disastrous ends

and address the psychological needs of her disempowered cast of characters” (Rajan 218). Divakaruni resorts to heavily orientalizing the mystical region, Tilo’s birthland, for two reasons: one, to make the excesses of her language and images recognizable; two, to entrap readers in an orientalist fantasy of food only to subvert it at the end when Tilo not only radically shifts her relationship with the kitchen but also changes herself. While Tilo is at the center of this narrative, the myriad customers are also significant in driving the narrative, and their stories evoke a regional imaginary as well. One of her first customers in the Oakland shop is Haroun, the taxicab driver, a Muslim from Kashmir, who remembers “blood and blood and blood” and to him, Tilo prescribes “chandani, powder of the sandalwood tree that relieves the pain of remembering” (27). Another visitor to her shop is Mrs. Ahuja, a bride from India, whose husband vents his frustration at not being able to cope with ‘Amreekah’ by beating and raping her nightly. Tilo imagines Ahuja as a man who often says “Aren’t I man enough man enough man enough”, and “the words shatter like dishes swept from the dinner table” (15). Tilo gives Mrs. Ahuja fennel for “mental strength for what must be done” (104) so she can reclaim her name, Lalita. Then there is young Geeta Bannerjee who is in love with Juan Cordero, a Mexican-American, much to the chagrin of her grandfather and parents, who fear her marrying a white man. Tilo offers a powder of almond and kesar “to

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<sup>9</sup>The Partition of India in 1947 was the division of British India into two independent dominion states, India and Pakistan. It carries a violent and bloody history, the trauma of which still has an impact on current day politics, society and national psychology.



sweeten words and thoughts, to remember the love buried under the anger” (92).

Tilo’s regional affiliation reflects in her intimate connection with the spices; she speaks to them, seeks advice, consolation and approval from them, she also provokes them when she falls in love, and finally turns her back on them and her birthland. In the beginning of the story, when she picks out her name, it is with an intensely personal investment with her heritage and region:

“Til is the sesame seed, under the sway of planet Venus, gold-brown as though just touched by flame. The flower of which is so small and straight and pointed that mothers pray for their girlchildren to have noses shaped like it. Til which ground into paste with sandalwood cures diseases of heart and liver, til which fried in its own oil restores luster when one has lost interest in life. I will be Tilottama, the essence of til, life-giver, restorer of health and hope.” (42)

The orientalized Old Mother, the First One, cautions her: “But remember: When Brahma made Tilottama to be chief dancer in Indra’s court, he warned her never to give her love to man only to the dance” (43). She foreshadows the troubles of the diaspora, and emphasizes one of the central conflicts of a South Asian woman’s diasporic adventures – love, loyalty and punishment often go hand in hand, especially when the regional affiliation is very abiding and unforgiving. In resolving all the domestic conflicts and pains of her customers, the central thematic is of desire

– repressed, excessive, painful, misguided and nascent. Tilo nurtures these desires and helps them grow in productive ways through the spices; in other words, she nurtures untold and sapling stories of the people around her, and in doing so, she taps into her own desires beyond being a mistress of spices. She remakes herself in the diaspora, not entirely affiliated to her birthland but also not entirely divorced from it.

“Reduce all stories to their basic elements and you’ll see all families are possessed of prejudice – that alternative name for ‘fear’” (1), Aliya says at the point when her narrative unfurls, and this foreshadows the central conflict at the heart of the many layers of family and gastronomic history. Shamsie’s novel is indeed peppered with tantalizing descriptions of elaborate meals which in Aliya’s memory often connect to her shifting relationship with Karachi and the diaspora. But, the story is really about the generational trauma of partition and about class, which are specifically tied to Karachi, and more so to the made-up space Dard-e-Dil. Dard-e-Dil (the wounds of the heart) is Aliya’s aristocratic clan and also the name of their ancestral stronghold in undivided India, which one half of the family had left to build a life in independent Pakistan after a family feud. Mariam, who had emerged one day claiming to be the daughter of Aliya’s lost great uncle who had stayed behind in India, eloped with the cook, shocking everyone and exposing their deeply entrenched class and regional pride. “. . . Dadi walked in

and called her a whore so I slapped Dadi because whoever Mariam might have married she was still Mariam and I would defend her against all those who couldn't see beyond their own class prejudices." (112) Four years later, when Aliya returns home to a Masood-less kitchen and sub-par food that reminds her of Mariam, she is forced to confront the reality of her own conditioning and her conflicted, torturous feelings about the love affair - "She's having sex with a servant. These words exactly flashed through my mind." (113)

One of the major sources of class and regional pride for the Dard-e-Dils was in the erstwhile royal cuisine, the grandeur of which was kept alive by Masood, who had prepared and served food with the proper and necessary blend of salt and saffron. Indeed it is the memory of Masood's food that enables Aliya to truly understand and embrace the class-less border-less future imaginary that she theoretically espouses in her academic circles.

"Masood once said to me, 'Why is it that when people exchange recipes they so often forget to mention salt?' I had laughed then and Masood, uncharacteristically offended that I shouldn't take him seriously, served unsalted food to the family that night.

'What is this?' Aba had said, staring down in horror at his plate, after just one morsel. 'What is this?'

How the absence of a single ingredient can alter the meal before you. How the absence of a detail can alter a story. How much salt had been left out in all the stories I'd ever heard from, and

about, my family? How much salt did I leave out when I turned my memories of Mariam and Masood into a story? Well, I knew part of the answer to that. I left out my own reactions." (178-9)

Food in Aliya's narrative becomes a metaphor for sexuality and desire, for the urge to taste and touch the forbidden fruit, for myths and memories, for re-imagining her family's values, the ancestral regional strong-hold, and her own complicity in perpetuating a prejudiced system of the past. This is also reflected early on in her attitudes toward Cal or Khaleel, the Pakistani-American she meets in London, a potential love interest she is excited by up until the point when she discovers that his family is originally from Liaquatbad, one of the poorer regions in Karachi, populated by lower class people. Food here becomes a marker of Khaleel's class and regional affiliation, which are not subsumed or subverted by diasporic success.

"Khaleel poured his tea into a saucer, blew on it and tipped it into his mouth. My eyes swivelled round to check that no one I knew was watching. ...yes, the Butts had succeeded in the US, and you wouldn't even know how humble his parents' origins were, except in moments when he revealed little habits he'd picked up at home, like slurping tea out of a saucer." (63-4)

For both Tilo and Aliya, as for many others, it is the resolution of their fraught relationships with significant people which signals a re-making of the self in the diaspora. It is not so much about the narratives of a heteronormative romance,



but rather the point is to inflect even the most mundane of the everyday – making connections with people, falling in love – with meaning and motive. Shamsie and Divakaruni invest the romance genre, often pejoratively considered to be the realm of women, and such narratives of intimacy with transformative potential.

Divakaruni and Shamsie’s novels are also characteristic in that they situate the romance subplot very firmly in the diaspora, such that the romantic conflict and its resolution highlight the contentions of a diasporic identity. Tilo equates her fiery romance with Raven to “the dry chilli, lanka...the most potent of spices ... [with] its blister-red skin, the most beautiful” but “its other name is danger” (37). At the end of the narrative, her rebellion against the spices to pursue her sexual desire for Raven is coincident with the 1987 San Francisco earthquake<sup>10</sup>, and she suspects it is lanka’s revenge, thus tying the American tragedy with an orientalist epicentre. As Gita Rajan notes, “the realistic register of the novel, running alongside, is based upon Tilo’s sense of self, her actions in and reactions to the people around” (219) and the cosmology of her origins steeped in food magic. Divakaruni couples Tilo, the Indian American, with Raven, the American Indian “unmasking the violence wrought in misrecognizing and misnaming the other

that is embedded in the primal scene of colonial encounter in America.” (220) with their coupling, disapproved by the spices of tradition and subverting popular notions of the Immigrant dream (of moving to become more ‘white’), they enact a new myth and create a new region for themselves. The immigrant-indigene romance in the strategic location of California redefines a diaspora that speaks to Tilo’s aspirations, skills and desires. What was once the colonial spice route from west to east (with all the attendant orientalism’s), is first reversed with the mystical food magic originating from Tilo, the postcolonial spice mistress. And finally, when Tilo takes on a new name “Maya” gifted to her by her indigene partner, she upends both heritage and coloniality to create a postcolonial liquid diaspora that is ‘home’ to her.

Like Tilo, Aliya too is caught between two regional imaginaries – the prejudiced yet beloved Dar-e-Dil and the diaspora with the fluidity of classes and borders – and her budding love story, stirring nostalgia for Mariam who had defied social norms to marry who she loves, highlights the internal conflict within her. It is, of course, through food that she resolves her dilemma and finds her place amidst the two contesting value systems. When a distant relative of the family chances upon Masood’s restaurant in Turkey, Masood sends along a parcel of food to his old employers in Karachi.

“To eat that meal was to eat centuries of artistry, refined in kitchens across the subcontinent. The flavours we tasted

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<sup>10</sup>San Francisco earthquake of 1989 was a major earthquake that struck the San Francisco Bay Area, California, US, on October 17, 1989, and caused 63 deaths, and nearly 3,800 injuries. It was the strongest earthquake to hit the area since the San Francisco earthquake of 1906.

were not just the flavours in the food, but also the flavours the food reminded us of and the flavours the food remembered.” (241)

For the very strictly region-situated Dard-e-Dil family, Masood’s situated food of their memory had transformed in that last meal into a diasporic imaginary that inspired tastes of beyond the region. The food also tastes of Mariam’s joy and bliss beyond the class and regional borders:

When I tasted that food I saw Mariam in a kitchen, a vast glorious kitchen, brushing saffron off her husband’s neck and dusting it on to her own lips. I saw Mariam listing names of vegetables – mooli, loki, bhindi, shaljam, gajjar, mattar, phoolgobi – as though the list were a ghazal, while Masood kneaded mangos to pulp in a bowl which suddenly had four hands, not two, intertwining and pressing. When I tasted that food I saw Mariam older and happy. (241-2)

And amidst the diasporic journey that Masood’s food and Mariam’s memory takes the Dar-e-Dil family on, Aliya seems to finally resolve her own contentions and generational conditioning. For the first time in her narrative, she is able to feel the “wonder” of love and the diaspora.

When the meal was finally over – the plates not licked clean, not entirely, because that would have meant that the cook miscalculated quantities, but nearly so, so very nearly so – Khaleel picked up the last grain of rice on his plate and, with everyone else distracted

by satiation, he placed the wonder of it all on my tongue. (242)

While Tilo’s socio- cultural space in Oakland is filled with unwarranted desires, struggling immigrants, and a regional magic, Aliya’s region reverberates with unresolved family conflicts and decades of cultivated Naz<sup>11</sup>, the flipside of which is class prejudice. Tilo, the architect of others’ immigrant dreams and Aliya, the family storyteller and historian, offer new readings of a liquid diaspora, of love and memory, and of ‘home’. In Shamsie and Divakaruni’s narratives, women tell stories of things and spaces that prompt ambivalence in them, and such ambivalent entities are common to most women’s stories. Especially in diasporic narratives, food, kitchen, family, and love are central ambivalences for a woman, and navigating the diaspora for a woman necessitates a navigation of these mixed feelings. Tilo and Aliya offer us some strategies to do that – by engaging with the silences and gaps, investigating the unreliable, evaluating both tradition and modernity with a critical lens, discarding what does not speak to them and embracing the fluidity of self and space.

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<sup>11</sup>Naz is an Urdu word which means an intimate sense of pride in one’s own self or family. Aliya’s grandmother often uses it to side-step questions of class prejudice.

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## Reimagining Social Science Research in India: Challenges and Prospects

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### Abstract

Social sciences are an important pole for social and economic development in modern societies and towards this end, the role of Social Science Research (SSR) in enriching societies is beyond doubt. To be able to play an enabling and meaningful role in public policy making, it is imperative that institutions involved in SSR are well governed. This calls for the creation of a dynamic and vibrant ecosystem that is responsive to the needs of the time. The autonomy of research institutions and the existence of democratic culture that guarantees freedom of scientific thinking and investigation is critical to the creation of a research friendly ecosystem. It is only in such an environment that social scientists can operate in socially responsible ways in their endeavour to play an emancipatory and instrumental role in public policy making at every level — sub-national, national, regional and global. This calls for a continuous and sustained investment in research activities.

**Keywords:** Social science, Research culture, Capacity building, social science policy.

### 1. Introduction

The importance of Social Science Research (SSR)<sup>1</sup> in today's world and its

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<sup>1</sup>Social sciences are a group of academic disciplines that focus on how human beings conduct themselves in their social and behavioural references. Social science is a relatively new field of scientific study that gained prominence in the 20th century. The findings of social scientists inform public policies, education programmes, marketing strategies and other human endeavours. The following broad range of disciplines are included in social sciences: Anthropology, economics, political science, psychology, sociology, geography, development studies,

role in enriching societies is indisputable. By generating scientific knowledge through a rigorous process of scientific inquiry, SSR has been playing a critical role in decoding the dynamics of human behaviour and thereby contributing to the shaping of public policy. Yet its overall influence remains limited. This primarily is on account of the huge disparities in

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social history, education, environmental planning, human geography, social policy, social work, social statistics, socio-legal studies.

research capacities across countries and also across regions within the same county, thereby resulting in the fragmentation of knowledge. What is visibly absent in the Indian context is an enabling eco-system armed with governing institutions that are equally robust and effective. This undoubtedly requires interventions at multiple levels, such as a clear funding policy and other pro-active endeavours to identify gaps in SSR. However, the fact remains that policy decisions in India, more often than not, are political in nature. Though India's SSR has been contributing to public debates and policy formulations, its contributions in pushing the frontiers of knowledge for further research is not very significant. Consequently, there is a sense among leading social scientists in the country that time has come to develop two inter-related components of institutional research capacity in social sciences: developing a *research culture* and developing *capacity building* at multiple levels — individual, organisational and systemic — to carry out high quality research. The article attempts at highlighting the significance and role of social sciences in the contemporary world of scientific research. It also examines the prospects of reimagining SSR in India given the complexities of the challenges involved.

## **2. Social Science Research: It's Significance**

The significance of social sciences is beyond doubt and this gets clearly reflected in the demand for social science knowledge all over the world. Social

sciences explores human dimensions of society, economy, polity, culture and religion and other complex issues such as electoral behaviour, democratic processes, conflicts in society, market dynamics and so on (Thorat & Verma: 2017: 2-3). Clearly there is an open acknowledgement that knowledge of social sciences serve useful purposes. This knowledge is used to analyse social change, to feed public debate, to develop responses to specific social issues and to assist private and public policy-making. This precisely is the reason that social scientists are active in varied ways and capacities. Their services are required everywhere — in universities, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), political parties, trade unions, firms, government and also in the world of media. However, the fact remains that social scientists have complex relationship with the societies in which they operate, where they serve as transmitters of knowledge, as experts, as observers of social phenomenon and as critical thinkers. As most social science unfold in the public sphere, social sciences have the potential to significantly contribute to public discourse provided it succeeds in liberating itself from the narrowly defined circles of hyper-specialised intellectual discussions. This in turn calls for a system to be in place that would:

- generate scientific outcomes and logically consistent empirical theories by applying a rigorous methodology;
- encourage the formation of sustainable research communities

that would secure autonomous judgement; and most importantly

- consider social science and political practice as two distinct forms of action (Martinelli, 2010: 287).

Here it needs to be remembered that social science like any other science is not a form of political activism, but a scientific craft geared at constructing a type of knowledge that is simultaneously empirical and critical in its approach. The debates on the relationship between social research, political practice and public policy have developed throughout history and a consistent theme has been about the ways in which social science can play a relevant role in the public sphere. Clearly there are multiple ways in which this happens.

The *first* relevant role for social science in the public sphere is to educate students to develop the knowledge and skills required to become public researchers, experts, officers, managers, professionals, but above all, responsible citizens of open democratic societies, where they are aware of both their rights and also key obligation towards the society. This is a major task and is often underestimated in discussions of social sciences's role in the public sphere. The *second* relevant role for social science is the articulation of key concepts and analytical models for constructing social reality. This enables the production of empirically tested findings and knowledge needed to describe, interpret and analyse a social phenomenon. Most significantly, it also helps hugely in combating prejudices and thereby raising the levels of public debate, decision

making and policy making on key local, national and global issues. These issues could cover every aspect of social reality ranging from migration, refugee crisis, multiculturalism, global governance, sustainable development, climate change, welfare security, gender justice, drug abuse and even crime control. The *third* relevant contribution of social science to public discourse is assessing the priority issues that need to be placed on the public agenda. This also implies participation in the articulation of the public agenda that needs to be taken forward. A *fourth* role for social science is to speak the truth in the face of power. This involves shaping public opinion in democratic polities by clarifying complex issues and their implications for the broader public. This also involves unmasking the power relations that underlie and shape social life. This not only serves as a corrective force to the state, it also hugely enhances the democratic legitimacy of the state both nationally and globally (Martinelli: 2010). A fifth significant role of social scientists is to participate as experts and members in government bodies to suggest ways and means to improve the governance of complex social problems. Towards this objective, independent research institutes, international organisations, NGOs and think-tanks alongside other civil society actors have an important role to play (Smith, 1997).

It is noteworthy that social sciences are an integral part of the preparatory courses of the curriculums in renowned global institutions that educate future national

elites. Law, economics and political science figure as key subjects in the curriculum. The career trajectory of top politicians, high ranking civil servants, legal luminaries and business executives in the leading developed countries such as Germany, France, UK and USA reveals that most of them have a back ground in social sciences (Hartmann, 2006). The objective is to empower future leaders with skills that enable them to understand social contradictions and also identify likely solutions to specific problems in specific contexts. The larger objectives being to promote: a) an understanding of the social and economic trends in the society and their implications for the well-being of the citizens; b) social engineering that would provide the skills to understand and resolve specific social problems; c) critical analysis of the functioning of societies, individual and group behaviour patterns; and d) an analysis of public policies and government actions. Social scientists are thus deeply involved in the processes that eventually come to influence political and administrative decision-making. Both as participants and providers of reliable information they inform the policy process through “metaphors, concepts and models” (Tarshys & Lachapelle: 2010: 294).

The idea that emerges from the above discussion is that social scientists have a huge role to play. From evidence-based policy making to shaping agendas, defining issues, identifying options and choices of actions, their role is enormous. Their role also involves the monitoring of the impacts and outcomes of policies adopted. For the

sake of objectivity, these endeavours however have to be executed from the perspective of semi-detachment and relative disengagement. A valid concern that arises in this regard is the extent to which these roles can be successfully performed given the complexities of the issues involved. This to a large extent would depend on the way social science knowledge is produced and, in the way global social processes are felt within different countries. In other words, this implies that the issues of social sciences require contextualisation in respect of scientific production, material and symbolic resources as well as superior working conditions that would include adequate research infrastructure such as availability of funds and generous sabbaticals that allow for comparative research and contextualisation. Autonomy of academic institutions and guaranteed freedom of scientific investigation, thought and speech are also relevant to the success of social sciences. This in turn depends upon the existence of democratic institutions and a democratic political culture in the society at large. The international position of the country in question, as well as the coalition of interests that dominates its domestic polity also affect the choice of research topics, paradigms, concepts and hypotheses.

### 3. Social Science Research in India

In the context of social science research in India, the moot question that needs to be asked is how best can India’s social science policy be reimagined? What are the key challenges? It will not be out of



context to highlight the views of the renowned American psychologist Gordon W. Allport. Way back in 1954 he observed in his famous book *Nature of Prejudice*:

“Social science cannot catch up overnight. It required years of labour and billions of dollars to gain the secret of the atom. It will take a still greater investment to gain the secrets of man’s irrational nature. It is easier...to smash an atom than a prejudice.” (Allport: 1954)

This in other words implies that a science engaged in the search of the truth of human behaviour calls for much more greater investments both in terms of time and resources. This in other words is the biggest challenge before social sciences. Prof Allport was clearly referring to the unfortunate tendency on the part of the state to accord less priority to investment in social science research as compared to the natural sciences. Priority to investment in scientific research is often justified on the ground that research in science results in gains through new technologies that yields evident benefits to humankind. Such gains are less visible in the case of social sciences. This assessment is certainly far removed from reality. There are ample examples to suggest that knowledge generated by social science research has also resulted in social technologies which have helped develop solutions that bring positive changes in the quality of human life. In fact, exploration in social science contributes much more. To put it succinctly, social sciences are “an

emancipatory project, a project to enlighten and educate and inform. Social science knowledge provokes critical thinking and the powers of imagination, to speak truth to power in their engagement with various questions, affecting the society and country” (Embong, 2010: xi)

Independent India, recognised the need for promoting social sciences in India as early as in 1948 when the University Education Commission was set up under the Chairmanship of Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. The Commission observed:

A social scientist has the whole community for his laboratory...For a proper understanding of human beings and the effective management human relations, we need to muster all our resources in psychology, sociology, political /theory, government and administration. We need the services of competent men trained in institutes of economic and social research for diagnosing and treating our economic ailments. We also need men of outstanding ability and force of character to work for us on the international field. They must be keen students of world history and world politics and it is up to our universities to undertake the important work of providing such men (Ministry of Education, Government of India [GoI] 1950:141).

Later on in 1953, the University Grants Commission (UGC) was designated as the prime agency to decide on all cases pertaining to the allocation of grants-in-aid



from public funds to central and other universities and institution of higher learning. From 1950 to 1970, the UGC remained the sole funding agency for social science research. The fifties and sixties witnessed unprecedented efforts in setting up new universities for teaching and research in different social science disciplines. During this period, the Planning Commission of India, set up in 1950<sup>2</sup>, also played an important role in involving social scientists in preparing the government's economic plans and also monitoring the execution and impacts of these plans. It set up the Research Programmes Committee in 1953 to support research in social, economic and administrative domains. Specialised institutes and Centres for Advanced Studies in university departments were set up to promote research in social sciences (Vyas: 1992). Special assistance programmes were initiated to strengthen research capabilities and grants for doctoral and post-doctoral research were substantially increased. It was in 1969 that Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) was set up with the singular objective of promoting social science research in India. Its research agenda was governed by the National Social Science Policy, which required the ICSSR to fund social sciences to build theories, encourage methodological innovations, undertake empirical research and assist in developing

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<sup>2</sup>Formed in 1950, the Planning Commission was an institution in the Government of India (GOI) assigned with the task of formulating India's Five-Year Plans. It also functioned as an advisory body to the GOI at the apex level.

policies to address the problems that the country faced.

The setting up of similar councils for history and philosophy, the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR)<sup>3</sup> in 1972 and the Indian Council of Philosophy<sup>4</sup> in 1977 were also important milestones in the sphere of social science higher education in India. The funding for social sciences by these agencies has ensured a regular flow of resources for research and other related activities like conferences, doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships, international collaborations, publications and capacity building of faculty and research scholars. Most importantly, it has helped in strengthening the research capabilities in social sciences. All these endeavours have expanded the research output in social science research and propelled India to the 13th rank in terms of volume of research output among the 26 most productive countries in the world (Thorat & Verma : 2017:10). The institutions conducting social research in India can be broadly classified into six categories:

- i. Social science departments and post-graduate colleges under UGC
- ii. Specialised Universities - Agricultural universities and institutes of technology and management

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<sup>3</sup>ICHR is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education (GOI). Its primary objective is to foster scientific writing of history and promoting high standard research

<sup>4</sup>ICPR is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Education (GOI) assigned with the task of coordinating, funding and supporting research activities in philosophy and promoting interdisciplinary research.

- iii. ICSSR supported research institutes (there are 28 of them)
- iv. Autonomous research institutes specialised in social science research
- v. Government supported research units
- vi. Private Consultancy Firms

Some of the leading social science research institutes established in the early decade of post-independent India (between the 1950s and the 1960s) included Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, Pune; Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai; Delhi School of Economics, Delhi; Indian Institute of Public Administration, Delhi. In due course other research institutes were set up such as: Institute of Economic Growth (IEG), Delhi; Centre for Developing Societies (CDS), Delhi; Madras Institute of Developing Societies (MIDS), Chennai; Centre for Policy Research (CDS), Delhi; Centre for Social Studies (CSS), Surat; Gujarat Institute of Development Research (GIDR), Ahmedabad; Giri Institute of Development Studies (GIDS), Lucknow; Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Trivandrum; Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad; Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru; and Institute of Public Enterprises (IPE), Hyderabad. It is significant that the research produced by these institutes is referenced in the policy documents of the key central ministries namely the Ministry of Education (formerly Ministry of Human Resource Development), Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE) and

Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). It also finds reference in the Planning Commission reports (Thorat & Verma 2017: 23).

Research in the social sciences in India has been dominated by particular disciplines. Traditionally, economics for long was the 'Queen of Social Sciences'. Sociology as a subject, also became very popular among postgraduate and research students. However, in the last few decades social science research has grown beyond the conventional disciplinary boundaries into areas that are pertinent to the current global and national socio-economic and political contexts. Globalization and development have emerged as major areas of research. Education and health are being researched across various institutes in India. Areas related to equitable and sustained development, poverty studies and urbanisation have also emerged as focus areas for research and study. New directions in feminist studies, women and gender studies, environment with emphasis on indigenous knowledge systems are some other areas for research. Again, rural development has also emerged as new area for both researchers and policy-makers. Inclusive development is another important theme, and so is gender, identity politics and the politics of globalization. Caste has always been a central category in social science discourse in India and there is a significant and growing body of work on its economic, political and social implications.

With the emergence of cultural studies, a specifically Indian school, known as

subaltern studies has developed. Mainly represented by post-colonial and social historians, subaltern studies challenges the strong elitist bias of the writings in modern Indian history. By providing an alternative framework of analysis the 'elitist nature of social science research' has been effectively challenged by those who believe that there is lack of egalitarian conditions in the realm of social science practice in the country. This line of thinking is a critique of the cultural hierarchies that operate through the existing academic and institutional structures in the country (Guru 2002).

Besides government supported research institutions, private research firms have also emerged and this umbrella term carries considerable diversity. These firms are associated with short cycle, empirical/survey-based research commissioned by multilateral donors, private corporate bodies and at times even by the Government. The thrust is on specific goal-oriented research for commerce, marketing, business management and other such purposes. As the private sector offers better research facilities, they do attract the best brains from the university system resulting in what is described as 'internal brain drain'.

#### **4. Trends in Social Science Research**

Two diametrically opposite trends are prevailing in social science research in India. One is the demand for social science research with regard to new facets of social problems that are increasing. Second is the reality that the scale of social science

research is inadequate and the same is unable to meet the criteria of quality and scope. Consequently, there is a mismatch between theory and empiricism and there is also a lot of duplication in social science research. Again, despite the interconnectedness of various components of society - polity, economy, governance, social fabric and cultural fabric, what we see is that research in social sciences is conducted largely on an individual component basis, in an isolated manner, in an individualist manner. As a result the outcome is not necessarily complete - it remains wanting on several counts. Also, as a majority of the social science research is funded by state agencies the possibilities of political steering in regard to the subject and outcome of research cannot be ruled out. Again, the dominance of economics as a discipline in SSR has been at the cost of other disciplines. It has created a gap in the development of social science research in India. These clearly are areas of grave concern.

At periodic intervals, there has been the reviewing of the status of social science research in the country starting with the first committee that was set up in 1973. This was followed by similar committees in 1978, 1986, 2007 and 2011. The first four committees were set up by the ICSSR and the last committee was set up by the Ministry of Human Resources Development (MHRD). In the year 2017, on behalf of the ICSSR, the Oxford Press published an impressive volume titled: *Social Science Research in India: Status, Issues and Policies*. It was the first

comprehensive exercise ever undertaken on the issue of social science research and policy in the country since independence and was the effort of a team of 31 senior researchers from various ICSSR institutes from across eight states in the country. This exercise was the first serious empirical analysis, examining the status of social science research in India, probing important aspects such as research infrastructure, output and quality of research and research funding. This exercise was of utmost importance given the wide implications of the outcome. Given the significance of the findings for social scientists in universities and colleges, it was felt that this study be brought to the public domain and not be restricted to academic circles. The study has brought to the fore the inadequacies on three major fronts — low priority to social science research in state and private universities, inadequate number of research institutes and regional disparities in the location of institutes and inadequate strength of researchers in the existing research institutes. The issues that need urgent consideration include the strengthening of research infrastructure, expanding the volume of research and its quality, promotion of some neglected disciplines and also international collaboration. An expansion of the funding of social science research is an urgent need and this calls for intervention both by the government and private sectors. State intervention is also needed to make the existing government research institutes more research intensive and research

oriented. Presently, most of them are mostly engaged in training activities.

A major problem in social science research that was identified was the paucity of teachers and researchers. The average number of faculty/researchers in social sciences is only 7 in universities and also social science research institutes. It is even lower in state universities as compared to central and private universities. There is also a perceptible regional disparity in the location of research institutes in India. Of the total 159 autonomous institutes, the main concentration is in Delhi (54) followed by Maharashtra (15), and 11 each in Kerala, West Bengal and Gujarat. The study found that the share of expenditure on SSR as percentage of total union budget of the central government was 0.025 per cent whereas it was 0.86 per cent for pure science. While estimating the demand supply gap, it was also found that supply of funds to SSR is much less than the requirement. Given the various streams of support, it becomes difficult to estimate the exact amount of funds available for SSR in India but it can be safely concluded that funding in general remains meagre. SSR needs a base line of stable funding which would allow institutions to attract and retain qualified professors and researchers, by offering them adequate research infrastructure that would support innovative research. Brain drain in search of conducive academic environment and better living conditions has also severely affected social science research in India. Funding has to be made available for a

sufficient period to produce results and retain talent.

The social science departments/chairs in university, research institutes engaged in social science research form an important component of the research infrastructure. It was found that out of the 740 universities in the country (as of March 2016), only about 486 universities housed 2,042 social science departments. The disciplines of economics, education, law and history are greater in number, followed by sociology, anthropology, social work, political science, geography and psychology. Departments in disciplines like national security, population studies and strategic studies are much less in number. The noticeable aspect revealed in the study is that the share of private universities has been expanding. The private universities account for about 35 per cent of the total universities in the country. The focus of the private universities is mainly on professional courses resulting in the neglect of social sciences. Of the 311 social science research institutions in the country, 159 are autonomous government institutes and it is these institutes which are the main hub of social science research in the country. These numbers, however are not adequate for a country of India's size and complexity.

Another worrying aspect that the study revealed is the high regional disparity in the availability of research infra-structure across the states. The same is the case of academic journals. About half of the existing journals are concentrated in four states of India namely Delhi, UP,

Maharashtra and West Bengal and the remaining half in the rest of the states of the country. A majority of them are related to the field of economics, followed by education, multidisciplinary subjects and law. Thus, both in the spread of research institutes and in the publication output, there is high regional concentration in favour of Delhi, Kerala, West Bengal, UP and Gujarat. However, in terms of research collaborations, it was seen that a majority of ICSSR affiliated research institutions have done reasonably well in terms of diversifying their research portfolios and advancing international collaborations. Having said this, it needs to be emphasised that though India has the highest volume of research in the South Asian region and is significantly ahead of many countries in the Global South, there is wide disparity in research activity and output across the country, both in terms of quantity and quality. Some premium universities and institutes in India have fostered world class academic research cultures, knowledge production with emphasis on peer review and also engagement with international intellectual networks and learned societies. But the quality of research in a large majority of institutions neither confirm to international academic standards nor have they been able to make significant contribution to social science research, either theoretical or applied. Also the research in Indian social sciences is mainly India-centric with the exception of international studies. Most of the studies do not go beyond the disciplinary boundaries and therefore have limited

explanatory powers. The ICSSR review committees have been consistent in highlighting the lack of 'incisive and original analytical studies, poor quality of research proposals and shortage of qualified researchers' as areas of major concerns in SSR in India. The use of vernacular languages as the medium of instruction at the post-graduate level have also impacted social science research. Lack of familiarity with English language can act as a fetter.

Another critical aspect of SSR is that many of the challenges that the social sciences are expected to address, require knowledge beyond the confines of a single discipline. Hence it is important to encourage interdisciplinary research and create institutional mechanisms to take it forward. Interdisciplinary research centres created with the objective to improve the understanding the social aspects of local, regional and global challenges is an imperative. It is also essential to reinforce multilingualism among social scientists. Being able to work and collaborate in one's own language while understanding other languages has become increasingly important in the realm of SSR. In this regard, translation, data treatment and circulation and collaborative tools require specific development. Different networks are also required with different purposes and memberships. Regional social science networks need to work to transcend disciplinary, linguistic, gender, generational, regional and ideological divisions. There is also need to negotiate with publishing houses to extend free and

open access to international peer-reviewed journals. National governments, non-state actors, agencies, and regional organisations also need to increase their support for open-access, peer-reviewed journals. Governments, research councils, foundations and funding agencies should pro-actively come forward to provide universities and research institutions the technology and resources needed to support equal access to the most important national and international journals in social sciences. It is encouraging to note that open- source technologies have fostered a variety of innovative modes of collaboration between social scientists across the world. Initiatives aimed at developing new digital tools for research, collaboration and networking in social sciences will therefore be of critical importance.

## 5. Conclusion

In an increasingly complex global public sphere, social scientists will continue to play important roles not just in the analysis of key global issues but also in defining policy options to deal with them. However, to be able to play critical roles in a socially responsible way, social scientists must fiercely defend the institutions of free science and the values of an open society. The comprehensive exercise on the state of social science research in India conducted by the ICSSR study highlights an urgent need to rethink the national social science research policy. There exists great disparities between regions, countries and institutions in terms of access to knowledge. Although institutional



infrastructure exists, the goal of SSR in India continues to be ambiguous in the absence of a clear strategy for its promotion. A robust policy calls for the creation of a national culture where evidence creation matters as much as its uptake in policymaking. This will go a long way in building our nation as well as strengthen the framework of our federal structure. Undoubtedly, the time to do it is now, when the global pandemic has compelled us to rethink all our priorities. It has reminded humankind of the urgency of structural and transformative reforms at the economic, social, cultural and behavioural levels. It needs to be remembered that social sciences are not mere academic subjects. They are much more than just

books and journals. They are not just documentary evidences. They are processes but certainly not isolated processes. They are part of the larger process of transformations that are constantly underway in any society. Viewed from this angle, social sciences and their current status and future direction are reflections of the social transformations that are currently underway in our society and have the potential to shape our own future and the future of our country by paving way for a *Shrestha Bharat* and *Atma Nirbhar Bharat* in the field of academics. This clearly can prove to be the stepping stone for self-reliance in every other sphere of our national life.

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## Food, Culture and Tourism: Interrelations and Its Impact on Food History

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### Abstract

Food, being the linchpin of society is an intrinsic fragment of culture. Food in fact is closely interwoven with culture. Over time food has become an identity symbol of a particular culture. People today remember and recognize a particular culture through different food items prevalent in a distinct cultural setting. Tourism in this context has a very important role to play. Tourism enables people across the globe to know and visualize various cultures and so is the case with food. Tourism enables people to reach out and enjoy the diversity of cuisines across the globe and develops a memory of a place, a culture based on that. Today food-based tourism is gaining universality and vogue as people are curious to explore and enjoy local cuisines. People are developing interest in knowing the history behind a particular food item and how it is prepared and what significance it holds in that very cultural setting. So, the paper aims to look into the close interrelations between food, culture and tourism, how it is developing over time and how it can contribute towards bringing out the histories of different cuisines hidden in our societies.

**Keywords:** Food, Culture, Tourism, culinary history, gastronomy.

### 1. Introduction

Food, culture and tourism are three different terms, each with broader meanings. Food and culture are interdependent on each other. If both are linked to tourism it can give to the visitors a real-time and unique experience of a destination making it worthy of visit. Amalgamating the three can play a pertinent role in understanding and experiencing various aspects of our society at large. It can shell out towards enriching

and elevating our knowledge about diverse local and global culinary and cultural patterns across the world followed by interesting histories behind how such cuisines and cultures were shaped.

### 2. Review of Literature

Vatika Sibalin "Food: Identity of Culture and Religion" addresses food as a way of communication. The cooking methods, use of different ingredients, how those were acquired and why a specific type of food is consumed helps in

understanding culture's approach to life. The article also addresses the widely varied food traditions of the world that food habits and culinary patterns even varies within a similar cultural pattern.

P.P. Mohanty, Dr. Himanshu Bhusan Rout, and Dr. Sapan Kumar Sadualin "Food, Culture and Tourism: A Gastronomical Trilogy Enhancing Destination Marketing, case study of Odisha, India" tries to establish the interdependency between food, culture and tourism for which they had used the term the Gastronomical Trilogy. The study reveals that today tourism is more about gaining real time meaningful experience of the destinations and food can play an important role in it by introducing them to the local culture and local cuisines through it. The study explores the state of Odisha as a potential destination for understanding the gastronomical trilogy and which will further benefit in the field of tourism marketing.

Ms. Gauri Shah and Mr. Kiran Shende in "A study on the importance of Food Tourism and its impact on Creating Career Opportunities amongst the Residents of Pune city" explores how food induced tourism or can be best called as food tourism specially around the local Maharashtra cuisines has been contributing towards generating employments opportunities in Pune.

Jun Wei, and Ryohei Nakatsuin "Leisure Food: Derive Social and Cultural Entertainment through Physical Interaction with Food" emphasizes that the meaning and purpose food moves beyond its

primary function of providing nutrition and energy to the body. Food has the capability to create social bonding and is a source of social and cultural entertainment. The study presents the concept of "Leisure Food" which seeks to utilize the unique potential of food and create new channels to derive increased social and cultural entertainment from the physical food interactions<sup>1</sup>.

Greg Richards in "Gastronomy: an essential ingredient in tourism production and consumption?" addresses the increasing importance of local cultures as a part of tourism. As an integral part of local cultures local cuisines plays the dominant role in attracting visitors to a destination since food is a symbol of cultural identity that has the ability to introduce a person to specific cultures. Because "we are what we eat"- our food habits, culinary choices, way of presenting and serving it and the way of consuming it speaks a lot about who we are and to which cultural background we belonged to. The article highlights the economic advantages that can be gained from food tourism of a destination.

Sajna S. Shenoy in "Food Tourism and The Culinary Tourist" highlights the role of culinary establishments like restaurants, cafes, local markets in providing the tourist a memorable experience of the local food and culture. Moreover the destinations aiming to attract the market based on food based tourism should ensure the availability of food and food related activities indigenous to a place and

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<sup>1</sup>Wei and Nakatsu 2012

introduce the tourist to the local cuisine and culture.

### **3. Objective of the Study**

Food, culture and tourism – three terms with broad meanings. Food and culture are closely related to one another while food based tourism which can also be called as food tourism or culinary tourism is gaining popularity in the recent times due to the increasing interest of the people to explore global cuisines. Amalgamation of the three has the potential to uplift and preserve local food and cultural heritage and can bring out culinary histories which are hidden in our societies. So, the paper aims to look into the close interrelations between food, culture and tourism, how it is developing over time and how it can contribute towards bringing out the histories of different authentic local cuisines hidden in our societies, within families and communities preserved in memories, authenticity of which might get lost in due course of time.

### **4. Research Methodology**

For writing the research paper “Food, Culture and Tourism: Interrelations and its impact on food history” secondary sources like books, and articles have been incorporated to understand the three main components – food, culture and tourism, the interrelations between them and how they have the potential to reconstruct the history of food and cuisines. Also instances from the visits to Rajasthan and Assam have been cited as examples where amalgamation of food, culture and tourism were closely witnessed.

## **5. Discussion**

### **5.1 Food, Culture and Tourism-Interrelations**

Food is everything what we eat that provides nourishment to our body and keeps us alive. Apart from its main purpose, food has got divergent meanings and various purposes. Socially food binds people together, fabricating a kind of bonding. People tend to indulge in food as a way of entertainment which gives them comfort along with acting as a stress buster<sup>2</sup>. It is also a salient and essential part of entertaining guests. Any festivities and celebrations are incomplete without food. In religious matter it is a way of showing respect to different gods and goddesses by offering them varieties of delicacies. Culturally, food is an identity symbol of a society, a community and a place.

Culture, in simple words, is the way of living of a community. In broader sense it embraces everything from festivals, customs and traditions, attitudes and behavioral patterns, religious preferences, costumes, language, food preferences, dining habits, food preparation methods, music, societal norms, and everything that defines a community. UNESCO has defined culture as the “set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and

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<sup>2</sup>Wei and Nakatsu 2012

beliefs.”<sup>3</sup> Food is a part peoples’ lifestyle which makes it an essential part of culture. Different societies have diverse food habits. Food as a part of culture helps in the identity formation of a place and of a society.

UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) defines Tourism as “a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities.”<sup>4</sup> Tourism enables people to gather experiences of various kinds. It provides people with firsthand experience of a destination, various landscapes, different climates, lifestyles and also food and culture are one such experience. Travelling allows people to explore and closely witness food and culture which is different from their own. Similar to the love for shopping local products, exploring and tasting local and traditional cuisines and trying to understand their cultures can add interesting and unique experiences to the journey. It creates alluring memories which the tourist carries with them of the place they visited. Food tourism or culinary tourism developing based on food and culinary patterns are gaining popularity due to the increasing love for food amongst the masses. Thus, people are becoming extremely inquisitive about diverse

culinary patterns across the globe and shows eagerness to try them.

Television shows, travel magazines, websites, food and travel blogs aids in developing inquisitiveness in the minds of people about a destination. Television channels showcasing travel and food shows are contributing a lot towards the development of this connection between food, culture, and tourism. These shows host renowned chefs and other celebrities who explore different geographical locations across the globe and indulge in local and indigenous cuisines and some also learns to prepare them. Along with that they enunciate about the ingredients used, utensils, stories behind that particular dish, histories, and not to mention the significance it holds. Such shows create interest in the minds of the audience who hopes to experience the same. In this way food tourism is gaining popularity. It was television shows initially and YouTube channels today which document this connection.

In India we have destinations where tourism along with food and culture can be witnessed. For instance, one can very closely witness this connection in case of Rajasthan, in the camps in the Thar Desert in the Golden city of Jaisalmer. As a part of the desert camping every evening the camps host cultural events to entertain the guests. After completing the desert safari, as a part of the package one is taken to a camp where women in Rajasthani traditional costumes greet and welcome the people by putting a tikka on the forehead. Thereafter one can enjoy the campfire

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<sup>3</sup>Culture n.d.

<sup>4</sup>UNWTO n.d.

along with a series of cultural programs like Rajasthani folk dance and playing of traditional musical instruments. At last, one is treated with their traditional delicacies like daal baati churma (a dish which is a combination three items-daal means lentils, baati is a kind of round shaped whole wheat bread cooked in traditional ovens, and choorma is a sweet delicacy made of wheat flour, millet flour or semolina), gate ki sabji (gatte is basically gram flour dumplings in spicy curd gravy<sup>5</sup>) and several other local dishes. In this way one can experience all the three things combined i.e., traveling, enjoying the beautiful desert landscape of the Thar and having a beautiful evening with food and culture. In Assam such a beautiful amalgamation of the three- food, culture and tourism can be witnessed at the Kaziranga National Orchid and Biodiversity Park which houses around 500 varieties of orchids assembled from across the northeast region making it a place of tourist attraction. They organize a cultural programme every day to entertain the guest which consists of ethnic music and dance performances. Here the visitors can also enjoy a hearty meal with all traditional Assamese dishes along with enjoying the beauty around.

To visualize the beautiful amalgamation of food and culture one should visit a destination during festival seasons. For instance, Durga Puja in West Bengal, Bihu in Assam, Chhath Puja in Bihar and so on. As during festivals food fairs are organized

at many places where traditional cuisines are exhibited and some even with live kitchen where one can witness the process of preparing it. Along with music and dance to entertain the visitors.

Culinary patterns are not the same across the entire country. Culinary patterns are mostly driven by the availability of ingredients in and around the locality. A particular dish undergoes variations based on the ingredients available locally or are modified as per the taste and preference of a region. Many a time's recipes for a dish vary from family to family within the same region. One best example of such variations are the different varieties of Biryani that we can get across our country India. Each state has their own style of preparing biryani, in fact there are instances where even a single state has multiple variations of the same dish. Like Kolkata version of biryani is different to that of Hyderabadi biryani for which the state of Hyderabad is famous for.

However, Food tourism is just not limited to merely eating in local and traditional themed restaurants of a region. It's more about exploring the roots and history of the culinary patterns by going into the grass root level and enhancing the knowledge about the same.

## **5.2 Impact of Food, Culture and Tourism in History**

Food choices of the people of a region are highly influenced by the geography and climatic conditions prevalent in that region and the historical background of the place and people residing there. Exploring food along with travel enriches the travellers

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<sup>5</sup>Gatte Ki Sabji

with the geographical knowledge of a region. One can get to know about the local vegetation's, and reasons for the adoption of a specific food choices by the local people.

When people visit a place they tend to explore the local cuisines of that place. Not only in terms of eating but they tend to know the entire process of preparation, how it is prepared, ingredients used, from where the ingredients have been sourced, specialty of that particular cuisine and also the history associated with it.

History tells us about social divisions related to food amongst rich and poor, about dining habits of the rich and the royals, it tells us stories of how people survived through minimal food during difficult circumstances. But history does not talk much about food that the common people ate, how they created wonderful recipes out of minimum ingredients, stories of how several cuisines evolved out of difficult circumstances. There are enormous stories related to food which are hidden in the society and in families which are transmitted orally through generations or are recorded in family histories but are left unexplored. Because what we see above the ground has much to do with the past. So while travelling one can eat, enjoy and dive deep into these histories and enhance their knowledge.

The entire process contributes towards the history in a way that it brings out various interesting stories related to diverse cuisines and cultures.

### 5.3 The search for local and authentic

Local cultures are becoming extremely popular in attracting visitors. Today people are interested in experiencing new cultures and food is an important part of it. Because many times a culture is identified with what the people eat. There is a popular saying 'we are what we eat', the meaning of this saying goes beyond the purpose of food as physiological needs but from cultural point of view we identify people and places through local cuisines<sup>6</sup>. Keeping this in mind the tourist destinations should focus on providing the visitors with local and traditional experience of the food and dining which could reflect their culture. While doing so if the food products are produced and resourced locally along with engaging local population in the food preparation and other services, it will alternatively help in generating employment opportunities thereby boosting the local economy<sup>7</sup>.

The tourist destinations can also organize cooking workshops where the interested tourists can learn to cook local cuisines besides relishing and enjoying them.

## 6. Conclusion

In today's world due to globalization where everything is changing, cultural fusion is taking place, food menus are changing, what is local is being replaced by everything global. Changes are necessary but within those waves of changes maintaining our tradition and authenticity of our cultures is the need of

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<sup>6</sup>G. Richards n.d., 3

<sup>7</sup>Ibid,p.13

the hour. Through tourism efforts can be made in reviving the local cultures and cuisines. Many people while travelling do search for food products, dresses and many cultural aspects specific to a region. Destinations which can facilitate a real time experience of the several cultural

aspects of a place, of the local people are sure to attract visitors and give them unique experiences and memories to carry with them. So combining food, culture and tourism can contribute towards preserving our identity and heritage and sustain it to our future generation to come.

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## Effects of Good Nutrition in Post Pandemic Era

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### Abstract

COVID-19 Pandemic becomes life threatening and emerging health ailment to every community all over the world and turn out to be vulnerable and particular to aged people with foregoing health consequences such as coronary heart disease, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus, and hypertension and so on. This COVID-19 lowers the power of the immunity system of the body thus invites various pathogen attack to the body. Nutrients present in the diet plays the primary role to decrease the mortality rate due to the occurrence of COVID-19. Adequate vitamins and minerals intake helps to boost up the immune system mechanism in the body. Along with that, vitamin D supplementation is required with special attention for cardiovascular comorbidity patients. Vitamin C produces antioxidants and creates a hurdle for the pathogenic organisms thus safeguard the immune system in the body. Minerals with a special attention to zinc is advised because of its ability to produce various enzymes and co-enzymes in company with the production of immune cells thus helps to improve immunity system in the body. Appropriate energy and protein intake becomes beneficial to upgrade the bio-security of the body. Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids are highly recommended to give a support to the immune functions. Short chain fatty acids are also advised to take to regulate the micro-organisms present in the gastro-intestinal tract. Consumption of saturated fat containing foods, sugary beverages, alcohols may lead to obesity which turns into a major risk factor for COVID-19 attack by becoming a precursor for inflammation and aggravate the disease conditions. Thus proper nutrition helps to prevent the adverse situation of COVID-19 and build up immunity against such viral infectious diseases. Having balanced diet and being physically active together with public awareness are the only way to survive against this coronavirus infection, spread out worldwide.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, Immunity System, Nutrients, Balanced Diet.

### 1. Introduction

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome determined in Wuhan, which is the province of Hubei, China (Bhargava *et al.*,  
Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) which is the 7th human corona virus was first

2020, Chen *et al.*, 2019). With the inoculation of samples of respiratory tract into human airway epithelial cells, Vero E6 and Huh7 cell lines, helps to trigger the segregation of a novel respiratory virus whose analysis of genome analysis proved it to be a novel corona virus associated to SARS-CoV (Ciotti *et al.*, 2020). The patients who have SARS-CoV-2 infection may have some common symptoms like – fever, shortness of breath, cough and cold (Hamming *et al.*, 2004). Gastro-intestinal symptoms are also present such as nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and diarrhea (Duerr *et al.*, 2007). The patients with COVID-19 normally shows decreased count of lymphocyte and eosinophil, lower hemoglobin values along with increased count of WBC, count of neutrophil and serum levels of CRP, ALT, AST, and LDH (Renu *et al.*, 2020). The cardio-vascular system is usually associated with complications such as myocardial infraction, heart failure, venous thromboembolic events, myocarditis and dysrhythmias and so on (Long *et al.*, 2020, Wu *et al.*, 2020). COVID-19 pandemic inflicts various challenges for every individual to maintain a healthy lifestyle and healthy diet (Hobbs *et al.*, 2015). Some important measures such as social distancing and self-isolation are associated to be effective in decreasing the spread of the virus, demolishing the graph of incidence rate and ultimately disease confinement (Wang *et al.*, 2019, Wang *et al.*, 2020). These proceedings have severe reverberation on both food utilization and food access (Haug *et al.*, 2007).

Containment helps to rise up the sedentary behaviors along with some activities of very low energy expenditure which are mainly performed by a sitting posture (Scully *et al.*, 2009). Very low physical activity levels have negative effects on physical health as well as mental health (Zhou *et al.*, 2020). The state of lockdown during COVID-19 leads to asymmetrical eating habits and recurrent snacking both of these are correlated with higher energy intake and increased the risk of developing obesity (Zhu *et al.*, 2020)

## 2. Objective of the Study

The objectives of this paper are-

- To know about the COVID 19 associated nutritional background.
- To know about the nutritional profile during post pandemic condition.
- To know about the health status of post pandemic patients.
- To know about the nutritional behaviour in the post pandemic era.

## 3. Research Methodology

This study is based on secondary sources of information as under-

- Nutrients are the most important one to combat COVID-19 and boost up the immunity system (Im *et al.*, 2020).
- Maximum patients are having vitamin D deficiency and Selenium deficiency (Im *et al.*, 2020).
- Vitamin D3 can be tested by using a validated liquid chromatography–tandem mass spectrometry method. High-performance liquid

chromatography can also be used for testing the levels of vitamin Thiamine (vitamin B1) and Pyridoxine (vitamin B6), an electro-chemiluminescence binding assay can be done for testing the levels of Folic acid (Vitamin B9) and Cyanocobalamine (Vitamin B12) and inductively coupled plasma–mass spectroscopy can be done for zinc and selenium (Im et al., 2020).

- The sample taken from the nasal swab or throat swab was used for the detection of nucleic acid of SARS-CoV-2 using real-time reverse transcriptase-polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR) and with the help of this COVID-19 can be detected in individuals. The affected as well as the post-COVID patients have decreased levels of serum vitamin D, Calcium and Zinc. With the testing of the blood sample, these levels can be detected (Elham et al., 2021).

#### 4. Discussion

A balanced diet and healthy life style is the key to cope up with the COVID 19 pandemic and post pandemic situation. The deficiencies of protein, calorie as well as energy and other specific micronutrients such as various vitamins and minerals are administered with lower immunity and high rate of susceptibility to various infections. A proportional intake of zinc, iron, selenium and various vitamins like vitamin A, vitamin E, vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine), and B12 (Cyanocobalamine) primarily important for the

conservation of the functions of immune system (Naja *et al.*, 2020).

Recent studies shows that there is a great role of nutrition in viral infections like COVID-19 and also in post pandemic situation. The fat-soluble vitamins such as A, D, E, and K whereas various minerals like zinc, selenium, copper etc. play a major role in the physiological mechanism of the immune system ((Jayawardena *et al.*, 2020, Wu *et al.*, 2019). Vitamin A helps to improve the responses to various vaccines and supplements both humoral and cellular immunity. The role of vitamin D is salient nutrient for old age and defence against viral infection. Vitamin D aids innate immune responses to influenza A-B, para-influenza 1–2, and decreased Vitamin D level is accommodated with a high risk for both upper and lower respiratory tract infections like COVID 19 (Jayawardena *et al.*, 2020). Vitamin D status plays a bit part in anti-viral immunity and pivot on vitamin D status in the human body, immunity have to be compromised, especially in the old people. Vitamin E deficiency is distinguished for the impairment of both cellular and humoral immunity systems. The fat-soluble vitamins has a major part in the growth and development of tissues. Vitamin C is also helpful for anti-viral immune response in rodents and also acts as an anti-oxidant (Jayawardena *et al.*, 2020).

There are various trace elements like minerals which holds up immune functions such as Se, Cu, Zn and Mg. Low levels of Zn is accommodated with high risk of viral infections including COVID 19, and Se has

some pleiotropic effects which has ranged from antioxidant to anti-inflammatory characteristics. Cu plays a role in differentiation of various immune cells, whereas Mg helps in the synthesis of immune proteins such as immune-globulin M. Immunoglobulin is one of the main targets of antibody who have tested for the exposure of COVID 19 (Jayawardena *et al.*, 2020).

Additionally with micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals, the essential fatty acids also play an important role in immune mechanism. The essential fatty acids have some modulatory effects on immunity and inflammation processes (Wu *et al.*, 2019). The EFA and other related Long Chain Polyunsaturated Fatty Acids (PUFA) acts as a substrate for oxylipins (OxL) and endocannabinoids (eCB) which are produced by various immune-competent cells which are the supporting system of immense immune functions and have a role in modulating the inflammation process (Watkins *et al.*, 2019). To prevent the inflammation produced during COVID and post COVID, a balanced diet is the one for the solution. It must incorporate sufficient amount of essential fatty acids which include both omega-3 and omega-6 PUFA for OxL and eCB that has modulatory and anti-inflammatory effects on immune system.

Vitamin C is majorly known as an antioxidant and acts as enzymatic co-factor for a lot of physiological reactions in the human body, such as production of hormones, synthesis of collagen and an important part in immune mechanism.

There is a great advantage of utilizing Vitamin C mega-dose with the help of prophylaxis programmer in the various community to decrease the incidence rate of common cold, which is very much seen in COVID-19 (Hemila *et al.*, 2013).

Trace elements like Zinc is known to play a principal role in human growth and development, helps to maintain the immune functions and many more. The deficiency of Zn has been connected with an increased risk to develop infectious diseases, incorporating viral infections like COVID-19 (Read *et al.*, 2019).

Another trace element named Selenium or Se has a broad range of pleiotropic effects, which has ranged from antioxidant actions to anti-inflammatory characteristics. Decreased levels of selenium has been accommodated with a developing risk of morbidity and mortality, low immune functions and declining cognitive ability whereas a high level of selenium in the body leads to antiviral effects also seen in COVID-19 and in post pandemic (Rayman *et al.*, 2012).

The present scenario of COVID-19 pandemic and post pandemic has immense positive effects on food and nutrition sciences, which has shifted its preliminary focus on human development, the maintenance of human body and non-communicable disease (Wu *et al.*, 2019). But for the very first time in the glorified history of modern nutrition sciences, the limelight is lined up to build the correlation between overconsumption of nutrients and development of a communicable disease. There is a great beneficial effects

with various combination of vitamins and minerals on the anti-viral immune response and inflammation process (Jaggers *et al.*, 2020).

Last but not the least, physical activity is the preliminary tool to maintain the health throughout the life in post pandemic situation. The advantages of exercise are wide in range including some are as follows-

- Daily exercise helps to facilitate the use of macronutrients in the body.
- Physical activity promotes the health of various organs.
- Daily physical activity for 30 minutes helps to maintain the metabolic activity and various physiological functions in the human body (Jaggers *et al.*, 2020).

## 5. Conclusion

COVID 19 is not only affecting our body during the onset period but also it has

spread its effects after the pandemic is over. So everyone should maintain a proper balanced diet and incorporate some amount of exercises in daily life to combat the post pandemic complications as well as to maintain the cardiovascular and respiratory system healthy and active. The people should choice their foods very carefully so that the plate contains more amount of energy, protein, essential fatty acids such as omega 3 and omega 6 fatty acids, a high amount of vitamins specially vitamin C and vitamin D and minerals such as Zinc, Selenium, Cupper etc. to maintain a healthful and active lifestyle along with the avoidance of junk foods which contains empty calories and leads to obesity which becomes a co-morbidity risk for the patients having COVID or the patients who are in post pandemic situation. So if anyone choice the right ones in their food plate, he or she will live heartily.

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## Dynamics of Online and Digital Education: What Research Says

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### Abstract

The growth and development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have a multidimensional impact on every sector of society. ICT has changed how we communicate with each other, how we find needed information, work, conduct business, interact with government agencies, and how we manage our social lives (Roztocki, Soja & Weistroffer (2019). The education sector is also exploring information technology for making teaching-learning attractive and useful (Sharma and Sharma, 2015) and the trend of online and digital education emerged as the most important area of study. Within years, the literature related to online and digital education and research studies has immensely flourished not only in technology education but in humanities and social sciences. Now a day, it becomes a more emerging area of concern. The objectives of the study were to provide a comprehensive picture of the research findings related to online and digital education and to suggest some relevant research gaps that can be worth exploring in the future. The study was based on the existing literature on online and digital education and discussed narratively. The study revealed that the right attitude and intensive training toward using technology to teach online is very essential. Integrating online learning systems within the existing curriculum and perceived effectiveness based on school locality are needed to be considered. It was also observed that teachers are facing difficulties in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper training and development for online classes. Technical issues are the major problem for the effectiveness of online classes. The NEP 2020 is an opportunity to reflect and change. It is time for action. If we fail to act today, tomorrow we may not be there to act.

**Keywords:** Information and Communication Technology, online and digital education, NEP 2020, right attitude and intensive training, effectiveness.

### 1. Introduction

The growth and development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have a multidimensional impact on every sector of society. ICT has changed how we communicate with each



other, how we find needed information, work, conduct business, interact with government agencies, and how we manage our social lives (Roztocki, Soja & Weistroffer (2019). The education sector is also exploring information technology for making teaching-learning attractive and useful (Sharma and Sharma, 2015). Meanwhile, the Covid- 19 pandemic has created a phenomenal change in the teaching-learning framework worldwide. New online and digital technology has been adopted by the education systems to minimize psychological distances despite social distancing. That's why it is observed that there have been a lot of advances in educational technology in the last few decades and the same proved to be immensely useful during this pandemic (Chatterjee & Chakraborty, 2020; Dhawan, 2020). The National Education Policy (NEP) - 2020 in India has underscored the developing need for online training in India. Several online and digital platforms are coming forward to serve immensely during the pandemic. Therefore, the terminology 'online and digital education' is becoming popular and effective day by day. Online education is nothing but an electronically supported teaching-learning process that relies on the internet. On the other hand, digital education is the innovative use of digital tools and technologies during the teaching and learning process. Hence, online and digital education is nothing but the combination of online and digital education in the teaching-learning process.

In a developing nation like India, education is still a dream for the multitude. Though we are living in the 21st century there are lots of barriers to the formal education system. As formal education is not so cost-effective, non-formal education system is gaining more popularity in recent years. Online and digital education is a modern way of teaching and learning by allowing learners to study within their own periphery of learning without being physically present in the educational institution. Having the features like free access to education for all makes a tremendous revolution in all phases of education distinctly at the higher education level.

Online and digital education at the higher-education level is likely to perceive an overhaul in the context of NEP-2020. It is the first education policy of the 21st century. It aims to address the growing developmental imperatives of India. The present policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, including its regulation and governance, to create a new system that is aligned with the ambitious goals of 21st-century education (NEP-2020, MHRD & Government of India).

The NEP-2020 is a very significant route for Indian education in general and specific in the context of online and digital education. During the pandemic caused by Covid-19, it is felt as very essential. That's why NEP-2020 itself says, "The recent rise in epidemics and pandemics necessitates that we are ready with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever

traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible.” (NEP-2020, MHRD & Government of India). In this regard, the NEP-2020 recognizes the importance of leveraging the advantages of technology.

## **2. Significance of the study**

The literature review is a significant part of any research work as well as identifying the trend of research. Further, the foremost purpose of literature studies is to establish a link with the academic and research areas relevant to the subject of research which can lead to placing a foundation for any research endeavour.

Digital education is largely an innovation of the last few decades. Technology has significantly brought changes in all aspects of human life. Technology has shifted face-to-face classes to virtual classes. Parents, students and teachers have experienced new teaching patterns. The ways of teaching and learning are transformed and can be done at home, in public places, and so on. Nowadays, time and place is no longer a barrier to teaching and learning activities. Online learning is carried out by utilizing existing technology through media that uses the internet to carry out teaching and learning processes such as cell phones and laptops. This media will support the teaching and learning process through available applications such as whats App, google classroom and so on.

The educational environments are anticipated as mitigation to unforeseen natural and artificial pandemics such as Covid-19 in 2020. Significant changes are

associated with the digitalization of some portions of the education system. That is why systematic studies in this regard are considered as most urgent.

Since open online courses are the most potent means for democratizing higher education and bridging the gaps across many barriers, the Government of India is still supporting MOOCs as free courses. Of course, ICT and virtual learning spaces will not solve all epistemological, moral and economic problems. But we must endeavour to provide the best for Higher Education through the judicious application of ICT sticking to our motto of providing quality education for all (Chatterjee, 2021). That can only be possible through scientific research in this area.

Many countries have responded to rapid technological change by reshaping school education to develop learners' capacities for working with data and computation. Despite the present situation, many nations' curriculum now lags behind digital education. India is not far from it. To mitigate this situation, proper scientific and systematic research studies are very much essential to frame the curriculum of online and digital education.

## **3. Title of the study**

In light of the above background and justification, the title of the study was stated as 'Dynamics of Online and Digital Education: What Research Says'.

## **4. Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were:

- i. To provide a comprehensive picture of the research findings related to online and digital education.
- ii. To suggest some relevant research gaps that can be worth exploring in the future.

### 5. Methodology of the study

The study was based on the existing literature on Online and Digital Education and discussed narratively. In this paper, an attempt has been made to review the related literature available which provided some insights to the investigator for the formulation of the objectives of this study. The investigator had gone through the different theses, dissertations, research articles, abstracts, journals etc., and observed that different research works have been conducted in the area of Online and Digital Education in India as well as abroad.

### 6. Delimitation of the study

Delimitation in terms of sources and period of data is presented below:

- i. *Sources of data:* All the data were based on Secondary sources of data collection. The main source was the internet, especially open sources.
- ii. *Period of data:* The data presented in the study was from 2011 to 2022 only.

### 7. Analysis of the data

Several studies on Online and Digital Education and relevant issues were carried out in India and abroad. Since the number of studies conducted is of recent origin, therefore all the available studies are presented in chronological order along

with a trend analysis of the reviewed research studies.

### Studies related to Online and Digital Education

Rayle (2011) conducted a study on Principal Perceptions about the Implementation and Effectiveness of Online Learning in Public High Schools in Indiana. The purpose of this quantitative study was to determine the principal perceptions and demographic relationship between the implementation and effectiveness of online learning in non-charter Indiana Public High schools. Analysis was prepared to determine whether demographic factors played a role in the principal's perceptions of the implementation and effectiveness of online learning. Factors examined included school location, school size, technology and support costs, principal's age, and principal's gender. The research design involved a population of 343 non-charter public high school principals serving grades of at least 10 – 12. Principal beliefs in the implementation and effectiveness of online learning were collected using a 44-item survey. Statistical analysis of the data included descriptive statistics regarding the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of selected items. A Pearson product-moment correlation and multivariate analysis of variance were used to test the null hypotheses. Significance was identified at the .05 level. In all, 241 principals of non-charter public high schools in Indiana responded to the survey instrument which questioned the perceived level of effectiveness and perceived level of

implementation of 15 specific uses of online learning. The study revealed significant findings in the overall perceptions of the implementation and effectiveness of online learning. Significance was also found in one or more of the 15 uses of online learning concerning the perceived implementation based on school locality. In addition, significance was found in one or more of the 15 uses of online learning in regard to the perceived effectiveness based on school locality.

Sari, Suryani, Rochsantiningsih & Suharno (2017) conducted a study on Teachers' Perceptions of Digital-Based Teaching Material. This study aims at describing the English teacher's attitude toward digital-based teaching material, describing the English teachers' obstacles to the development of digital-based teaching materials, and describing the English teacher's perception of the procurement and development of digital-based teaching materials. Qualitative methodology was used to collect and analyze the data obtained from all the respondents. The subjects of the research were the English teachers of Senior High School in Solo. The data collection used in this research was questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaire was specifically designed to answer research objectives related to teachers' perceptions of the use of ICT in Senior High Schools in Solo. In analyzing the data, the researcher used qualitative analysis of interactive models. The results reveal that the English teacher's readiness towards digital-based

teaching materials is only slightly more than neutral; another finding indicates that teachers have the desire to integrate digital-based teaching materials effectively in the classroom. It can be concluded that the English teacher at Senior High School in Solo needs intensive training in the use of digital-based teaching materials to fully support the teaching and learning process.

Situmorang & Mahuraja (2018) conducted a study on online learning and its challenges for parents. The study stated that technology has significantly brought changes in all aspects of human life, the changes that occur require everyone to change from old habits to new habits that are not used. Changes in general in face-to-face classes began to shift to virtual classes. Even the elements of education have undergone many changes both parents, students and teachers. They experience new teaching patterns and ways of teaching. Learning places are transformed and can be done at home, public places, and so on. Time and place are no longer a barrier to teaching and learning activities because they can be done online. Online learning is carried out by utilizing existing technology through media that uses the internet to carry out teaching and learning processes such as cell phones and laptops. This media will support the teaching and learning process through available applications such as WhatsApp, google classroom and so on. Learning brings many challenges and obstacles faced by parents in particular. Of course, this is a challenge in itself for parents in monitoring children's learning

activities, especially in the application of technology as a learning medium for children.

Garg, Aggarwal, Upadhyay, Kumar & Singh (2020) conducted a study on the effect of covid-19 on the school education system: challenges and opportunities to adopt online teaching and learning and concluded that school students need to deal with various sorts of ecological, electronic, and mental battles because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The whole education system from elementary to tertiary level has been imploded during the lockdown time of COVID-19 in India and worldwide. The New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has been delivered by the recently renamed Ministry of Education. The approach has given another face to the Online Education System in India.

Chaurasia (2020) published an article on National Education Policy (NEP) 2020: A Boon to Online and Digital Education and concluded that NEP-2020 seems to be one of the best education policies to provoke online and digital education across the country. The policy has focused on the various key issues and challenges of the present society and societal needs, for the promotion of every class of society. It seems to be fully inclusive and participatory as well as child-centred in terms of teaching-learning and assessment. The policy has laid a strong foundation for nation-building with a holistic approach to the overall development of each and every student of the country with their choices, their abilities, and producing the best out of them. The policy and its recommendations

can lead India to grow more and more and become one of the leading countries in terms of digital Education Technology, Research, Teaching and a stress-free education system across the country.

Bhaumik, and Priyadarshini (2020) conducted a study on the E-readiness of senior secondary school learners to online learning transition amid the COVID-19 lockdown. This study attempts to find out the e-readiness of senior secondary school learners for transition to online learning along with their views on this mode of learning transaction. The quantitative descriptive survey method was used for this study. A questionnaire comprising 20 Likert-type items covering four dimensions, viz. access, digital literacy and e-readiness, delivery of online learning, and online load, was administered on a 100-student sample from different schools of Delhi using non-probability sampling. Access to online learning and online load on learners were found to be high. The study also revealed that only 35.2% of learners found online classes as effective as face-to-face classes. The delivery of online learning by teachers and the digital skills of learners were found lacking. The geographical scope of the study is limited to the National Capital Region of Delhi which has better smartphone penetration and internet access as compared to other states in India. The study concludes that online pedagogy and the digital skills of teachers and learners need to be strengthened for a possible roadmap ahead. The study may provide useful insights into

the challenges of online learning and areas for further improvement.

Gupta & Gupta (2020) conducted a study on e-learning in covid-19 lockdown (a case study of primary school students in Moradabad city. The impact of the lockdown enforcement on the Primary school students in the city of Moradabad, Uttar Pradesh and the adoption of e-learning tools and platforms by the schools and students were conducted in this study. This research paper is an effort to understand the response of the students from primary classes (1 to 5) toward the new concept of the online/ E-learning process. With the analysis, the study revealed that the response of students has been very much towards the positive adoption of the E-Learning / Online learning process. The teachers are putting in more effort to make online learning more productive and it is evident that the content delivered to the student is pretty much effective and the process has fewer bottlenecks. The researchers are happy to conclude that the process has just begun and the limits of the E-learning / online learning process have a vast scope in the school curriculum.

Kulal and Nayak (2020) conducted a study on the perception of teachers and students toward online classes in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi District. The study aimed at analyzing the perception of teachers and students about online classes. The analysis was carried out using the data collected through two separate structured questionnaires for students and teachers in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi District in

Karnataka. Data were recorded in SPSS and analyzed by using descriptive statistics. The study reveals that students are comfortable with online classes and are getting enough support from teachers but they do not believe that online classes will replace traditional classroom teaching. It also finds that teachers are facing difficulties in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper training and development for online classes. Technical issues are the major problem for the effectiveness of online classes.

Rahayu & Wirza (2020) conducted a study on Teachers' Perceptions of Online Learning during Pandemic Covid-19. The study investigated EFL teachers' perceptions of online English language learning. Their perceptions were analyzed in three aspects: perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and their attitude toward online English language learning. This study employed a descriptive design with a qualitative approach. A survey questionnaire and interview were used in this study to elicit the responses from 102 Junior High School English teachers in Bandung. The findings of the study revealed that the participants showed a positive perception of the usefulness and ease of online learning systems during the pandemic Covid-19. Still, more than half of teachers didn't agree with its effectiveness. Even though teachers face many online teaching process problems, they could show the right attitude toward using technology to teach online.

Coman et. al. (2020) conducted a study on online teaching and learning in higher



education during the Coronavirus pandemic: students' perspective. The research focuses on identifying how Romanian universities managed to provide knowledge during the Coronavirus pandemic, when, in a very short time, universities had to adapt the educational process for exclusively online teaching and learning. In this regard, we analyzed students' perception regarding online learning, their capacity to assimilate information, and the use of E-learning platforms. An online survey based on a semi-structured questionnaire was conducted. Data was collected from 762 students from two of the largest Romanian universities. The results of the research revealed that higher education institutions in Romania were not prepared for exclusively online learning. Thus, the advantages of online learning identified in other studies seem to diminish in value, while disadvantages become more prominent. The hierarchy of problems that arise in online learning changes in the context of the crisis caused by the pandemic. Technical issues are the most important, followed by teachers' lack of technical skills and their teaching style improperly adapted to the online environment. However, the last place was assigned by students to the lack of interaction with teachers or poor communication with them. Based on these findings, research implications for universities and researchers are discussed.

Suleiman and Danmuchikwali (2020) conducted a study on Digital Education: Opportunities, Threats, and Challenges and

stated that digital education is largely an innovation of the last few decades, although it already existed in various forms slightly earlier. Shortly, the educational system environments are anticipated as mitigation to unforeseen natural and artificial pandemics such as Covid-19 in 2020 by the significant changes associated with the digitalization of some portion of the system. This article aims to provide valuable perspectives on ICT and digital education into its future benefits, risks, and challenges of embracing the latest technologies in the digital era, and vast online open courses. We have checked a profound change in the way we interact and generate within academics with the advent of internet technologies. Globally, the digital revolution favored open access to information. Classrooms today have got a lot of ICT resources that nearly all the teachers have made great strides to incorporate digital technology to increase access to information and collaborative activities for the learners.

Naik, Deshpande, Shivananda, Ajey & Patel (2020) conducted a study on online teaching and learning of higher education in India during covid-19 emergency lockdown the covid-19 pandemic has generated a worldwide consciousness that the present way of lifestyle does not work. Many areas need revolutionary changes and it has become obvious, one among them is the educational sector. In India, educational institutes/universities remain closed since the mid of March-2020, because of the fast spread of COVID-19. An emergency lockdown has been a



preventive measure that upended the life of students, parents, and teachers. To combat these inevitable crises educational sectors started conducting online classes. The sudden changeover in teaching/learning methods has raised new challenges and opportunities. In this study, a survey based-investigation has been carried out to analyse the efficacy of online teaching and learning method compared to the traditional teaching method. A questionnaire-based survey is prepared to collect the data from different degree students, faculties and parents with the general public. A total of 874 responses were gathered from people of different backgrounds who participated in the survey. The analysis of collected responses confirms that the traditional chalk-and-talk methodology is often better than online sessions. Results and analysis indicated that lack of facilities, infrastructure, technical tools, and internet access is the major drawback for conducting online sessions. The suggestions and recommendations are provided to improve the current online teaching methods to outreach many students and improve the quality teaching/learning experience. The precautions to be taken by the universities to avoid the rapid spread of COVID-19 cases are high lightened, if colleges/universities open before vaccination.

Bordoloi, Das & Das (2021) conducted a study on perception towards online/blended learning at the time of the Covid-19 pandemic: academic analytics in the Indian context to understand the

perceptions of the teachers and learners regarding the use of online /blended learning modes and to find out the prospects and challenges of providing online/blended learning in a country like India. The academic analytic approach was used for the study. A structured questionnaire was designed in Google forms covering perceptions of the teachers and learners in different Indian Universities and Colleges regarding online and blended services and analysis was done using Google analysis. The study concluded that blended learning could be the solution for providing education in the context of 21st-century India, However, unlike in the case of conventional education, open education has widened the scope of learning adhering to the motto-“Bring your own device” to learn. The extensive use of open educational resources, massive online courses, social media, and meeting apps during the Covid-19 lockdown, has opened up the minds of knowledge-hungry people, further enabling them to receive the necessary educational inputs, pieces of training and skills even during the current pandemic situation. This is going to have a big impact on the ways of educational transition in the days to come.

Naveen (2021) published a paper on NEP, 2020: Curricular and Pedagogical Reforms for Online and Digital Education. The paper presents curricular and pedagogical reforms for online and digital education. It develops a platform for open online courses supported by various portals in improving the quality of education with

the initiatives of the NEP, 2020 policy. The recent rise in epidemics and pandemics necessitates that HEIs are ready with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible. In this regard, the NEP, 2020 recognizes the importance of online and digital education.

Jindal and Chahal (2022) conducted a study on the Challenges and Opportunities for Online Education in India. Considering the rapid technological change, inevitable changes in the education sector are going to happen. A lot of research is taking place to understand the pros and cons of online education in comparison to face-to-face education. In India, there are a lot of challenges and opportunities for online education. With a comprehensive literature review, in this paper, we have identified key factors which will boost online education in India. We have identified internet penetration; the low cost of online education, ease of doing a course, an initiative by the government, employer recognition and bridging the gap are the key factors in the growth of online education. Certain factors are creating a hindrance in the growth which include insufficient digital infrastructure, credibility, and language used in online education. With the increase in the number of internet users in India, the paper also looks into what opportunities are there in the future in the education sector.

## 8. Trend analysis of the reviewed research studies

The review of the studies cited, reveals that 15 studies have been conducted on online and digital education and most of them are during or later the pandemic period. Thus, brief reviews of all the studies conducted lead to the conclusion that online and digital education is a new phenomenon, and Covid-19 has brought its emergence very fast. Further, in India NEP-2020 is now developing a platform for online and digital education supported by various portals in improving the quality of education. Hence, in light of the above discussion, it is hypothesized that the present study would result in a positive outcome in terms of online and digital education. It will also be helpful for improvement as well as formulation of a plan and program in the near future.

## 9. Findings of the study

Based on the reviews the following findings were worked out:

### *Objective -1:*

Brief depiction of the research findings that have related to-

- a) Importance of online and digital education:
  - i. To make learning more and more learner-oriented, need-based and hassle-free.
  - ii. The rise in epidemics and pandemics necessitates that HEIs are ready with alternative modes of quality education whenever and wherever traditional and in-person modes of education are not possible.

- iii. NEP-2020 develops a platform for open online courses supported by various portals in improving the quality of education.
  - iv. Students need to deal with various sorts of ecological, electronic, and mental battles because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The approach has given another face to the Online and Digital Education System in India.
- b) Issues to the teacher:
- i. Teachers didn't agree with its effectiveness.
  - ii. Teachers face many problems in the online teaching process.
  - iii. Teachers have the desire to integrate digital-based teaching materials effectively in the classroom.
  - iv. The teacher needs intensive training in the use of digital-based teaching materials to fully support the teaching and learning process.
  - v. The delivery of online learning by teachers and the digital skills of learners were found lacking.
  - vi. Teachers are facing difficulties in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper training and development for online classes.
  - vii. Technical issues are the major problem for the effectiveness of online classes.
- c) Issues to the students:
- i. Students are comfortable with online classes and are getting enough support from teachers.
  - ii. They do not believe that online classes will replace traditional classroom teaching.
  - iii. Teachers are facing difficulties in conducting online classes due to a lack of proper training and development for online classes.
  - iv. Technical issues are the major problem for the effectiveness of online classes.
- d) Issues to the parents:
- i. Learning Limitations and Media Resources
  - ii. Limited time
  - iii. Mastery of Technology
- e) Threats and Challenges of Digital Education
- i. Computer Literacy
  - ii. Lack of Teacher-Student Physical Interaction
  - iii. Need for Self-Discipline
  - iv. Technological Difficulties
  - v. Poor Time Management
  - vi. Digital Education is not suitable for Practical Courses
  - vii. Transmitting virus
- f) Ways to effective implementation of online and digital education:
- viii. Online pedagogy and digital skills of teachers and learners need to be strengthened for a possible roadmap ahead.
  - ix. They could show the right attitude toward using technology to teach online.
  - x. Teachers have the desire to integrate digital-based teaching materials effectively in the classroom.

- xi. The teacher needs intensive training in the use of digital-based teaching materials to fully support the teaching and learning process.

**Objective -2: Suggestions for Further Research:**

Research in any field is never a closed book (Singh, 2018). There is always a continual need for finding the solution to the new problems taking place in the field day by day and test the variety of solutions to the existing problems. There is a great need for more research with diverse populations utilizing these measures (Murphy, 2003). For further research a few suggestions are given below:

- i. The present study was based on Secondary sources of data. For the validation of the data may be collected from primary sources.
- ii. A comparative study may be done to find out the differences between different stakeholders.

The above suggestions are not extensive. However, they have been enumerated in order to indicate the possible studies that could be undertaken immediately in this important area. Thus, research studies in this area support good scope and will contribute to making noteworthy contributions in the field of online and digital education.

**10. Educational implication of the study**

Based on the findings of the study following implications can be drawn: The present study focuses on already conducted studies on online and digital education. For a better future, it is

necessary to undertake more research in this area to moderate online and digital education. Therefore, it is suggested that if the policy-makers, educationists, and administrators concentrate on this issue, things would definitely change for the betterment of the academic arena.

- The whole education system must be reconstructed and reoriented to meet the emerging online and digital needs of teachers and young learners.
- Most of the old teachers are not well trained in the recent technology application. Teachers perceived that they are inferior. In this situation, such a type of study may help a lot.

**11. Conclusion**

The present study aimed to review the research studies online and digital education and data were collected from Secondary sources available on the internet (open sources). The study revealed that online and digital education is an emerging concept and found more relevant in this digital era. Therefore, to identify the real nature, their effects, and the ways and means to reconcile this particular emerging concept, scientific studies as well as popularization of the findings of the significant studies are felt as very much essential. In this regard, NEP-2020 seems to be one of the best education policies to provoke online and digital education across the country. The policy has focused on the various key issues and challenges of online and digital education. It seems to be fully inclusive and participatory as well as child-

centred in terms of teaching-learning and assessment. The policy and its recommendations can definitely lead India to grow more and more in digital

Education Technology, Research and Teaching to all Indians. Online and digital education should be framed as a stress-free education system across the country.

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## LGBTIQPA+ Movies of Europe: A Diachronic Penetration

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### Abstract

This research paper illuminates and investigates film studies, LGBTIQPA+, queer cinema in general and history of LGBT movies produced in Europe in particular. The prime discussion and analysis is preceded by introduction, objective, inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary relevance and scope as well as methodology. The discussion and analysis section includes issues like cinema; film studies; queer or LGBTIQPA+; LGBT cinema; queer cinema as an emerging trend in film studies; new queer cinema; types of LGBT movies based on sexo-romantic orientation, language and socio-culture, and geographical location; European queer cinema; country wise representative sample LGBT films of Europe; generation wise brief summary of the history of European LGBT motion picture etc. Finally, conclusion and references sum up the discussion.

**Keywords:** Europe, Film Studies, LGBTIQPA+, Sexo-romantic Orientation.

### 1. Introduction

This research paper entitled “LGBTIQPA+ Movies of Europe: A Diachronic Penetration” is a mild effort to explore the history of LGBT movies produced in the continent of Europe. Humanities concentrates in the matters related to heart or emotion, imagination, human values, qualitative and subjective issues. On the contrary, Social Sciences relies upon brain or intelligence, real and factual data, human conditions, social issues, quantitative and objective aspects. Film Studies is encompassed within the circles of humanities as it is concerned about the critical appreciation of the art

and aesthetics of cinema basically. On the other hand, Queer Studies belongs to social science as it requires factual data collection and quantitative investigation. But, Queer Cinema focuses the critical appreciation of the art and aesthetics of LGBT movies having qualitative and subjective in nature. Film Studies itself is a new subject born out of Mass Communication and Journalism. Again, Queer Cinema is an innovative genre emerging within the academic discipline of Cinema Studies. Hence, the brief history of the LGBT movies created in Europe has been the prime concern of this research paper.



## 2. Objectives of the study

The prime Objectives of this research paper are mentioned below:

- a. To familiarise cinema in general and film studies in particular.
- b. To explain queer or LGBTIQPA+ in general and queer cinema in specific.
- c. To introduce the country wise representative sample European LGBT motion pictures.
- d. To summarise the generation wise brief history of queer cinema produced in Europe.
- e. To compare the history of LGBT movies produced in various nations of Europe with each other.

## 3. Inter-disciplinary & multi-disciplinary relevance & scope

This research paper is highly inter-disciplinary in nature. It embraces History, Film or Cinema Studies, Queer-Sexuality & LGBT Studies (Gender Studies), Area Studies (European Studies), Queer or LGBT Cinema etc. in an amalgamated fashion. It studies Film History in general and Queer Cinema History in specific pertaining to the LGBT silver screens produced in Europe. The high degree of mingling of several subjects is an evidence that this paper is inter-disciplinary in feature.

## 4. Methodology of the study

The methodology adopted while pursuing this research is Descriptive Research. The same has been classified into several segments according to geographical regions as Europe in general and different countries in particular as per

their language, culture and social aura etc. This paper is purely explorative in nature from the angle of research methodology and Internet based Library Work has been the process of Sampling Method, Data Collection, Data Analysis and Conclusion. Years of production and popularity of the LGBT movies have been the basic criteria to select them as representative queer cinema of the country in this list of history.

## 5. Discussion & Analysis

**A. Cinema:** Cinema is the melting pot of sixty six art forms, which are mentioned in *Natyashastra* by Bharat Muni except Cinematography and Editing. Cambridge Dictionary defines it to be “A series of moving pictures, usually shown in a cinema or on television and often telling a story”. A film is also termed too be cinema, moving images, talkie, motion picture, celluloid, moving picture, movie, picture or photo play. It is a work of visual art which simulates experiences. A movie communicates stories, emotions, ideas, ambience, perceptions, beauty, nava rasa with the application of moving images. These running pictures are mixed up and synchronized with sound and background music. The purpose of cinema is entertainment, education, information, social transformation etc. The three fundamental aspects of cinema are literary aspect, dramatic aspect and cinematic technical aspect. Movies can be sub-divided as commercial film, art or parallel film and fusion film.

**B. Film Studies:** Film Studies or Cinema Studies is the systematic, scientific and in

depth exploration, study, analysis of the artistic and aesthetic aspects of the art of cinema. It is an academic discipline originally practiced under Mass Communication which has enjoyed the status of an independent subject at present. The sole domains of Cinema Studies are history of cinema, theories of movie, film criticism, appreciation of motion picture, cinema review etc. It investigates cinema as an art form and a medium.

**C. Queer:** Queer is an umbrella term engulfing all the types of sexo-romantic orientations. Queer is also known as Third Gender or LGBTIQPA+, which implies Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Questioning, Pansexual, Asexual & Plus.

Lesbian is an individual who is physically and psychologically a female, and is sexually and emotionally interested in other females. Gay is an individual who is physically and psychologically a male, and is sexually and emotionally interested in other males. Bisexual is an individual who may be physically and psychologically either a male or a female, and is sexually and emotionally interested in both males and females equally. Transgender is an individual who is physically male and psychologically female. Again they may be physically female and psychologically male too. The mind does not support the body of a Transgender. Hence, some of them undergo medical surgery to change their sexual organs according to their mental set up and desire. Intersex or She male is an individual having upper part of the body

with female organ while lower part of the body with male genital. They are popularly known as *Kinnar* or *Hijra* in India. Questioning is an individual who is not confirm regarding own sexuality. Pansexual is interested in all the types of LGBTIQPA+. Asexual lacks the desire for sexual discourse. The term 'Plus' indicates that there are more categories which have not been discovered till date.

**D. Queer Cinema:** Queer Cinema is the genre of movies depicting the lives, issues, problems, acceptance, negligence, struggles, sufferings, homophobia, bullying, torture, beating, molestation, suicide, killing, death penalty, and any other matters related to LGBTIQPA+ community. It is also termed as LGBT Film.

Cinema Studies is basically a part of Media and Mass Communication. Recently, Film Studies has enjoyed the status of an independent subject in academia. It has also been embraced by English and other Literature subjects in the recent decades. Though Film Studies itself is an analogy of an emerging interface of flux, yet, it has welcomed LGBT Cinema as a part of it. Hence, Queer Cinema is a novel concept which is emerging as a new trend of studies in the academic discipline of Film Studies of late.

**a) New Queer Cinema:** 'New Queer Cinema' is a cinematic movement regarding the independent LGBT movies produced during the first half of the 1990s. It was film scholar & critic Prof. B. Ruby Rich who coined this term in the academia for the first time in the journal *Sight &*

*Sound*during 1992. 'Queer New Wave' is another term for it. The LGBT films produced after 1990 may be considered under the camouflage of this banner. The rejection of heteronormativity and the lives of LGBT protagonists living on the fringe of society are the major themes of New Queer Cinema.

**b) Types of Queer Cinema as per Sexo-romantic Orientation:** Queer Cinema can be classified as lesbian cinema, gay cinema, bisexual cinema, transgender cinema, intersex cinema, pansexual cinema, asexual cinema etc. based on Sexo-romantic Orientation.

**c) Types of Queer Cinema as per Language and Culture:** Queer Cinema can be categorized according to their language and culture as English LGBT Movies, Spanish LGBT Movies, French LGBT Movies, German LGBT Movies, Russian LGBT Movies, Italian LGBT Movies, Greek LGBT Movies, Portuguese LGBT Movies, Dutch LGBT Movies, Swedish LGBT Movies, Chinese LGBT Movies, Japanese LGBT Movies, Korean LGBT Movies, Thai LGBT Movies, Arabic LGBT Movies, Hebrew LGBT Movies, Hindi LGBT Movies, Bengali LGBT Movies, Tamil LGBT Movies, Assamese LGBT Movies etc.

**d) Types of Queer Cinema as per Geographical Region:** Geographical Region may be another basis for division of queer films. The continents contribute in renaming the categories as Asian Queer Cinema, European Queer Cinema, North American Queer Cinema, Latin American Queer Cinema, Australian Queer Cinema

and African Queer Cinema. Further, it may be sub-divided as per country as American LGBT Films, Canadian LGBT Films, British LGBT Films, Swiss LGBT Films, Mexican LGBT Films, Argentine LGBT Films, Indian LGBT Films, Philippine LGBT Films, Egyptian LGBT Films, Iranian LGBT Films, Israeli LGBT Films etc. as per their country of production.

**E. European Queer Cinema:** The LGBT movies produced in the countries within the continent of Europe are considered under the surveillance of European Queer Cinema from the perspective of Geographical location. Russia is located both in Asia as well as Europe. Hence, Russian Queer movies may be counted to be both Asian and European (Eurasian) Queer Motion Picture. Some Spanish queer films produced in Latin American nations like Argentina, Peru or North American country like Mexico are not European from the continental point of view. Likewise, some French LGBT celluloids made in Canada or Africa are not European in nature. Again, Portuguese movies having LGBT themes produced in Brazil are excluded from being termed as European. Hence, to enjoy the label of European Queer Cinema, a movie ought to sustain the criterion of being produced within any of the countries officially included in Europe continent.

**F. Country wise Representative Sample of LGBTIQPA+ Movies of Europe:**

**a) France:** 1) *The Eclipse: Courtship of the Sun and Moon / L'éclipse du soleil en*

- pleinelune* (1907), silent film: directed & acted by Georges Méliès. 2) *Our Paradise / Notre Paradis* (2011): directed & written by Gaël Morel. 3) *Blue is the Warmest Colour / La Vie d'Adèle –Chapitres 1 & 2* (2013): directed, produced & written by Abdel latif Kechiche. 4) *Stranger by the Lake / L'Inconnu du lac* (2013): directed & written by Alain Guiraudie. 5) *Call Me by Your Name / Chiamami col tuo nome* (2017): directed & produced by Luca Guadagnino. 6) *Flee* (2021), English & Danish language animated documentary film: directed & written by Jonas Poher Rasmussen.
- b) Sweden:** 1) *The Wings / Vingarne* (1916), silent film: directed & written by Mauritz Stiller. 2) *Thirst / Three Strange Loves / Törst* (1949): Swedish & German language movie; directed by Ingmar Bergman. 3) *The Silence* (1963): directed by Ingmar Bergman. 4) *Show me Love / Fucking Åmål* (1998): directed & written by Lukas Moodysson. 5) *Tove* (2020): Swedish, Finnish, English & French language movie; directed by Zaida Bergroth.
- c) Germany:** 1) *I don't Want to be a Man / Ich möchte kein Mann sein* (1918), silent film: directed & written by Ernst Lubitsch. 2) *Laws of Love: From the Portfolio of a Sexologist / Gesetze der Liebe: Aus der Mappleine Sexualforschers* (1927), silent documentary film: directed & produced by Magnus Hirschfeld & Richard Oswald. 3) *Romeos / Romeos ... anders als du denkst!* (2011): directed & written by Sabine Bernardi. 4) *Free Fall / Freier Fall* (2013): directed & written by Stephan Lacant. 5) *Futuro Beach / Praia do Futuro* (2014): German & Portuguese language movie; directed & written by Karim Ainouz.
- d) Turkey:** 1) *Leblebici Horhor* (1923), silent film: directed & written by Muhsin Ertuğrul. 2) *Ver Elini Istanbul* (1962): directed by Aydin Arokan. 3) *Haremde Dört Kadın* (1965): directed by Halit Refiğ.
- e) Switzerland:** 1) *Borderline* (1930): English language movie: directed & written by Kenneth Macpherson. 2) *The Circle / Der Kreis* (2014): Swiss German, French & German language movie; directed & written by Stefan Haupt. 3) *Knife+Heart / Un couteau dans le cœur (A Knife in the Heart)* (2018): French language movie; directed & written by Yann Gonzalez. 4) *Beyond the Horizon / Le milieu de l'horizon* (2019): French language movie; directed & written by Delphine Lehericéy. 5) *My Little Sister / Schwesterlein* (2020): Swiss German language movie; directed by Stéphanie Chuat & Véronique Reymond.
- f) United Kingdom:** 1) *First a Girl* (1935): directed by Victor Saville. 2) *My Beautiful Laundrette* (1985): directed by Stephen Frears & Written by Hanif Kureishi. 3) *Edward II* (1991): directed & written by Derek Jarman. 4) *Mrs Dalloway* (1997): directed by Marleen Gorris, based on the 1925 novel of the same name by Virginia Woolf. 5) *Bend it Like Beckham / Kick it Like Beckham* (2002): directed, produced & written by Gurinder Chadha. 6) *I can't Think Straight* (2008): directed & written

- by Shamim Sarif. 7) *Weekend* (2011): directed & written by Andrew Haigh. 8) *Poshida: Hidden LGBT Pakistan* (2015), documentary film: directed by Faizan Fiaz and others. 9) *The Secret Kiss* (2017): directed & written by Richard Mansfield. 10) *God's Own Country* (2017): directed & written by Francis Lee.
- g) Italy:** 1) *Germany, Year Zero / Germania anno zero* (1948): German, English & French language movie; directed, produced, written & music by Roberto Rossellini 2) *Fellini Satyricon / Satyricon* (1969): Italian & Latin language movie; directed & written by Federico Fellini. - *II* (1980): French language movie; directed by Édouard Molinaro. 3) *Pasolini* (2014): Italian, French & English language movie; directed & written by Abel Ferrara. 4) *Arianna* (2015): directed, produced & written by Carlo Lavagna. 5) *Human Factors* (2021): German, French & Flemish language movie; directed & written by Ronny Trocker.
- h) Spain:** 1) *Diferente* (1962): directed by Luis Maria Delgado. 2) *Law of Desire / La ley del deseo* (1987): directed & written by Pedro Almodóvar. 3) *Nico and Dani / Krámpack* (2000): directed & written by Cesc Gay. 4) *Burnt Money / Plata quemada* (2001): directed & written by Marcelo Piñeyro. 5) *Bulgarian Lovers / Los novios búlgaros* (2003): Spanish, English & Bulgarian language movie; directed by Eloy de la Iglesia. 6) *So my Grandma's a Lesbian! / Salir del ropero* (2019): Spanish & English language movie; directed & written by Angeles Reine.
- i) The Netherlands / Holland:** 1) *Therese and Isabelle / Thérèse et Isabelle* (1968): French & English language movie; directed & produced by Radley Metzger. 2) *Caged / Uitgesproken* (2013), Dutch language short film: directed, produced & written by Dylan Tonk & Lazlo Tonk 3) *Boys / Jongens* (2014): Dutch language movie; directed by Mischa Kamp. 4) *New Queer Visions: Right beside you* (2020), Dutch, French, English, Spanish & Portuguese language anthology of six short films: directed by François Barbier, Samuel C. Montes de Oca León, Joe Morris, Claire Zhou, Maria Augusta V. Nunes & François Barbier. 5) *Benedetta* (2021): French language movie; directed & co-written by Paul Verhoeven.
- j) Denmark:** 1) *Daddy, Darling* (1970): English language movie; directed by Joseph W. Sarno. 2) *Pretty Boy / Smukkedreng* (1993): directed & written by Carsten Sonder. 3) *Nymphomaniac / NYMPHOMANIAC* (2013): English language movie; directed & written by Lars von Trier. 4) *Human Factors* (2021): German, French & Flemish language movie; directed & written by Ronny Trocker.
- k) Belgium:** 1) *The Devil's Nightmare / The Devil Walks at Midnight / La plus longue nuit du diable (The Devil's Longest Night) / La terrificante notte del demonio (The Terrifying Night of the Demon)* (1971): French language movie; directed by Jean Brismee. 2) *Wild*



*Side* (2004): French, English & Russian language movie; directed & written by Sébastien Lifshitz 3) *Puppylove* (2013): French language movie; directed & written by Delphine Lehericéy. 4) *Raw / Grave* (2016): French language movie; directed & written by Julia Ducournau. 5) *Summer of 85 / Été 85* (2020): French language movie; directed & written by François Ozon.

**l) Greece:** 1) *Blue Passion* (1977): directed by Pavlos Filippou. 2) *Boy Prostitute* (1985): directed by Omiros Efstratiadis. 3) *Safe Sex* (1999): directed & written by Michalis Reppas & Thanasis Papathanasiou. 4) *Jesús* (2016): Spanish language movie; directed & written by Fernando Guzzoni. 5) *Ex* (2020): directed by George Markakis.

**m) Norway:** 1) *Life and Death / Liv og død* (1980): directed by Petter Vennerød & Svend Wam. 2) *All about my Father / Alt om min far* (2002), biographical documentary film: directed, written & cinematographed by Even Benestad. 3) *Thelma* (2017): directed & written by Joachim Trier.

**n) Hungary:** 1) *Another Way / Egymásra nézve* (1982): directed & written by Károly Makk and co-directed by Janos Xantus. 2) *This I Wish and nothing more / Nincsennekem vágyam semmi* (2000): directed by Kornél Mundruczó. 3) *Colette* (2018): English language movie; directed & written by Wash Westmoreland.

**o) Portugal:** 1) *Der Rosenkönig* (1986): directed by Werner Schroeter. 2) *The Phantom / The Ghost / O*

*Fantasma* (2000): directed, written & edited by João Pedro Rodrigues. 3) *The Ornithologist / O Ornitólogo* (2016): directed & written by João Pedro Rodrigues. 4) *Until Porn Do us Part / Até Que o Porno Nos Separe* (2018): directed, written & edited by Jorge Pelicano.

**p) Russia:** 1) *100 Days Before the Command / Stodney do prikaza* (1990): directed by Hussein Erkenov. 2) *Father and Son / Otets i syn* (2003): directed by Alexander Sokurov. 3) *You I Love / Yalyublyutebya* (2004): directed, produced & written by Olga Stolpovskaja & Dmitry Troitskiy. 4) *Siberia and him* (2019): directed, produced, written, acted & edited by Viatcheslav Kopturevskiy.

**q) Luxembourg:** 1) *The Merchant of Venice* (2004): English language movie based on the drama of the same name by William Shakespeare; directed & written by Michael Radford. 2) *The Ordeal / Calvaire* (2004): French language movie; directed & written by Fabrice Du Welz. 3) *House of Boys* (2009): English, French, German & Luxembourgish language movie; directed & written by Jean-Claude Schlim.

**r) Romania:** 1) *Love Sick / Legături bolnăvicioase (Sickly Relationships)* (2006): directed & produced by Tudor Giurgiu. 2) *Beyond the Hills / După dealuri* (2012): directed & written by Cristian Mungiu. 3) *Poppy Field* (2020): Romanian, English & French language movie; directed by Eugen Jebeleanu.

## **G. Brief Summary of the History of European Queer Cinema:**

**a) First Generation of European LGBT Movies:** The first generation of European queer cinema encompasses the silent era of world cinema between 1901 and 1930, which is contributed by France, Sweden, Germany, Turkey and Switzerland. The first ever torch bearer LGBT movie in the entire history of European queer cinema is the French silent cinema from France entitled *The Eclipse: Courtship of the Sun and Moon / L'éclipse du soleil en pleine lune* (1907); directed & acted by Georges Méliès, even prior to the World War-I. The record of the second oldest European LGBT celluloid is grabbed by the Swedish silent film from Sweden labelled as *The Wings / Vingarne* (1916); directed & written by Mauritz Stiller, which is followed by the German silent movie from Germany named *I don't Want to be a Man / Ich möchte kein Mann sein* (1918); directed & written by Ernst Lubitsch, during the World War-I. The Turkish silent motion picture from Turkey christened as *Leblebici Horhor* (1923); directed & written by Muhsin Ertuğrul also joins the list. Finally, the English language sound talkie from Switzerland known as *Borderline* (1930); directed & written by Kenneth Macpherson concludes this age.

**b) Second Generation of European LGBT Movies:** The second generation of European queer cinema emerges at the dawn of the period of the sound talkies between 1931 and 1970. This era has been enriched by the United Kingdom, Italy,

Spain, the Netherlands and Denmark. The pioneer queer movies in each of these various European countries during this phase are the British English language talkie from the United Kingdom famous as *First a Girl* (1935); directed by Victor Saville, which has been followed by the German, French & English language celluloid from Italy christened as *Germany, Year Zero / Germania anno zero* (1948); directed, produced, written & music by Roberto Rossellini. The milestone LGBT cinemas during the 1960s are the Spanish language cinema from Spain called *Diferente* (1962); directed by Luis Maria Delgado, which has been followed by the French & English language movie from the Netherlands namely *Therese and Isabelle / Thérèse et Isabelle* (1968); directed & produced by Radley Metzger as well as the English language film from Denmark named *Daddy, Darling* (1970); directed by Joseph W. Sarno; which have contributed to the warehouse of the European LGBT cinema of this period.

**c) Third Generation of European LGBT Movies:** The third generation of European queer cinema encircles the age between 1971 and 2000, during the emergence of the concept of 'New Queer Cinema'. The leading countries during this phase of the queer cinema movement in Europe are Belgium, Greece, Norway, Hungary, Austria, Poland, Portugal and Russia. The first LGBT movie representing each of these countries are as follows: The French language motion picture named *The Devil's Nightmare / The Devil Walks at Midnight /*



*La plus longue nuit du diable (The Devil's Longest Night) / La terrificante notte del demonio (The Terrifying Night of the Demon)*; directed by Jean Brismee as well as the English language film called *Daughters of Darkness*; directed & written by Harry Kümel, both of which have been produced from Belgium in the same year 1971. The next country is Greece with the Greek language celluloid called *Blue Passion (1977)*; directed by Pavlos Filippou. The last contribution of the decade is the Norwegian Language film from Norway labelled as *Life and Death / Livogdød (1980)*; directed by Petter Vennerød & Svend Wam. The fresh entries in the list of the 1980s are the Hungarian language cinema from Hungary entitled *Another Way / Egymásra nézve (1982)*, directed & written by Károly Makk and co-directed by Janos Xantus, which is followed by two motion pictures produced in the same year 1984 from two different countries. One is the German language movie from Austria christened as *Wiener Brut (1984)*; directed by Hans Fadler as well as the other is the Polish language motion picture from Poland named *Sexmission / Seksmisja (1984)*; directed, produced & written by Juliusz Machulski. Finally, the Portuguese language celluloid from Portugal entitled *Der Rosenkonig (1986)*; directed by Werner Schroeter, along with the Russian language cinema from Russia entitled *100 Days Before the Command / Stodney do prikaza (1990)*; directed by Hussein Erkenov conclude not only this third generation era of European

LGBT cinema, but the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century too.

**d) Fourth Generation of European LGBT Movies:** The fourth generation of European queer cinema spreads from 2001 to the year 2020, which has been contributed by Luxembourg, Romania and Bulgaria. The English language movie christened as *The Merchant of Venice*; directed & written by Michael Radford, based on the drama of the same name by William Shakespeare, along with the French language cinema named *The Ordeal / Calvaire*; directed & written by Fabrice Du Welz, both produced in Luxembourg in the same year 2004 are the fresh entries at the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup>. century. The next in the queue is the Romanian language celluloid from Romania entitled *Love Sick / Legături bolnăvicioase (Sickly Relationships) (2006)*; directed & produced by Tudor Giurgiu. Finally, the ultimate entry into this list is the Bulgarian language short film from Bulgaria named *You are Beautiful (2015)*; directed by Hristo Poriazoff.

**6. CONCLUSION:** In order to conclude this research paper, it must be confessed that the History of European Queer Cinema is richer enough than the histories of LGBT movies from the other continents. These LGBT motion pictures are classified into four categories as first, second, third and fourth generations of European queer cinema with the application of the temporal demarcation lines of years. France, being the torch bearer and inventor of movie camera is the maker of the first ever queer

film on this planet. The Netherlands, being a liberal nation regarding LGBT acceptance has contributed a large number of LGBT film. Another LGBT friendly country Belgium is not lacking behind. Though Luxembourg is a small country, yet it has produced several queer movies, as the law approves homosexuality in this land. Though Russia is a leading and large nation, yet very few LGBT films are

observed in Russia. The contribution of queer cinema by the countries like United Kingdom, Ireland, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Switzerland, Turkey, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Bulgaria, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland etc. are average according to their socio-cultural ambience.

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## Dynamics of History in Assamese and British Novels: A Contrapuntal Study with Particular Reference to Padmanath Gohain Boruah's Lahori and Thomas Hardy's Far From the Madding Crowd

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### Abstract

This Paper is an attempt to explore how the dynamics of history impacted the Nineteenth Century literary world of Assamese and British Literature specifically focussing on Padmanath Gohain Boruah's novel *LAHORI* and Thomas Hardy's *FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD*. Nineteenth century was the budding phase of Assamese Novel and it was a flourishing moment for British Novel. In the evolution of Assamese novel Padmanath Gohain Boruah's contribution is immense. So, here the Assamese novelist Padmanath Gohain Boruah's novel *LAHORI* is taken into account. On the other hand, Thomas Hardy was a foremost regional novelist of the nineteenth century England. On an apparent level both the novelists do not chime in with an absolutely different literary, topographical and cultural background behind them. Moreover, at the time of Gohain Boruah's appearance on the literary scene of Assam, novel was in its infancy. But for English novel it was a flourishing moment. Thomas Hardy wrote fourteen novels and Padmanath Gohain Boruah's were two---*Bhanumoti* and *Lahori*. Both the novels of Gohain Boruah are based on the background of Ahom days, portraying some vivid historical moments imbibing in contemporary social ambience though not a historical novel as such in the real sense of the term. On the contrary Hardy's novels are set in the Wessex and depict the moment of a fast changing world in an age of technological development. Affinity between the two novelists is that both of them belong to the same age i.e. the nineteenth century and their creations express the universal appeal of love. Here in this paper, an effort would be made to conduct a comparative analysis of Gohain Boruah's novel *Lahori* and Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*. So, this paper is inspired by the intention of shedding light how history plays an important role in shaping literary creation thereby creating a literary history. Thus with a view to creating a history with an objective eye, the less trodden world of Assamese novel at the very initial stage of its genealogy through the comparison of Gohain Boruah's novel with Hardy's work highlighting the basic thrust of comparative literature are to be considered here.

**Keywords:** Dynamics, History, Comparative, Novel.

### 1. Introduction

This paper is an attempt to explore how the significant moment of history impacted the Nineteenth century literary world specifically focussing on the realm of novel of Assamese and British. Nineteenth

century was the budding phase of Assamese Novel and it was a flourishing moment for British Novel. In the evolution of Assamese novel Padmanath Gohain Boruah's contribution is immense. So, here the Assamese novelist Padmanath

Gohain Boruah and his creative ambience is taken into account which has been flourished in the budding phase of Assamese novel. The novel as a genre in Assam sprouts as a result of “the western system of education that was introduced by the British administration” (Borua, 167). So, it is inspired and also profoundly influenced by the west. Here, in this paper, the Victorian novelist Thomas Hardy is also considered to get a panoramic view of the socio historical reality of a faraway land through the literary domain of west. In Assamese Literature novel traversed its journey in Arunodoi with the translation of Bunian’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* as *JatrikarJatra*. But it is acknowledged that in the real sense of the term novel in Assamese literature begins with Pamanath Gohain Boruah’s *Bhanumoti* which has been published in Bijuli (a remarkable journal of Jonaki age). On the other hand, Thomas Hardy was a foremost regional novelist of the nineteenth century England. On an apparent level both the novelists do not chime in with an absolutely different literary, topographical and cultural background behind them. Moreover, at the time of Gohain Boruah’s appearance on the literary scene of Assam, novel was in its infancy. But for English novel it was a flourishing moment. Both the novels of Gohain Boruah were based on the background of Ahom days, portraying some vivid historical moments imbibing in contemporary social ambience though not a historical novel as such. On the contrary, Hardy’s novels were set in the Wessex and depict the moment of a fast changing world

in an age of technological development. Affinity between the two novelists is that both of them belong to the same age ie the nineteenth century and their creations express the universal appeal of love. Because in spite of cultural differences, their works are centred on the same temporal space. So, this investigation is based on the basic principle of comparative literature i.e. universal appeal of literature may be merged in a glocalised universe pronouncing the fluidity of literary passion in a more marked way bringing out the significant role of history in shaping literary text thereby recreating history. Thomas Hardy wrote fourteen novels and Padmanath Gohain Boruah’s were two-- *Bhanumoti* and *Lahori*. For the convenience, here in this endeavour Gohain Boruah’s *Lahori* and Hardy’s *Far from the Madding Crowd* will be taken into account for particular reference. Further, any creative writing is always conditioned by the age or milieu of his/her socio-historical reality. So, here an effort has been made to illuminate the literary domain of Padmanath Gohain Boruah and Thomas Hardy in the light of New Historicism highlighting the historical moment and historicity of literary text. As literary work is a product of the time, place and historical circumstances and not an isolated work of art so, this research venture would be a study in this direction.

## 2. Review of Literature

In this paper an endeavour is made to study Padmanath Gohain Boruah and Thomas Hardy in relation to historical facts

as articulated in their texts and the actual happenings of history. The novels of Hardy have been so much commented upon that any new effort to deal with them inevitably involves a difficult task. Traditional scholarship stresses the tragic vision of Hardy's novels. The author's profound melancholy and grim resignation fascinates readers as subject for critical enquiry. From 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards we find a large number of eminent scholars addressing themselves to a study of Thomas Hardy's novels. The purpose is to understand the enormous strength of the novels of the author who still remains one of the most widely appreciated English novelists. The earliest critical appreciation of Hardy's works started in the nineteenth century which predominantly concentrated on Hardy's stoical pessimism and his sense of the inevitable tragedy of human life. The whole issue of Hardy's pessimism was raised by R.H. Hutton in a review of *The Mayor of Casterbridge* published in *Spectator* (5<sup>th</sup> June, 1886), Lionel Johnson's 'The Art of Thomas Hardy' (1894) tried to give a new dimension to Hardy's work focusing on his disagreement with Hardy's general sentiments and appreciated his fine imaginative power and skill as a writer. His stress on certain aspects of Hardy's novels like the choice of powerful characters and their clash with men of more modern experiences, his concept of erotic love and predominance of certain tragic curve in the development of his plot etc. provided valuable information on Hardy's work. However commenting on Hardy's later

novels in 'Novels of Character and Environment' (1912), F Manning identifies tragedy as the central preoccupation of Hardy's later novels which is derived from the depth and richness of his emotional nature. DH Lawrence (1914) condemned Hardy for not allowing his characters to assert and live by their own innate vitality. Placing Hardy's novels in the tragic context, Virginia Woolf (1928) appreciated the poetic power in his novels. Hardy's critic Jean Brooks (1971), put emphasis on the poetic element which explains and justifies the tensions and seeming contradictions of his art. The study of Tony Tanner (1968) and David Lodge (1966) was based on the 'poetic' principle of Hardy's style. The poetic approach had the great merit of concentrating attention on the words and its evocative power which invalidated the preoccupation of earlier critics with his excessive use of chance and co-incidence and pessimism. From 1870 onwards, in the criticism of Douglas Brown, J. C. Maxwell, biographical and sociological strain was to be found. In the twentieth century understanding of Hardy, feminist criticism marked a shift in emphasis. Feminist critic like Elaine Showalter (1979) Kristin Brady (1986) made an important contribution to the understanding of Hardy's work from feminist perspective. A significant trend of Hardy's criticism developed in twentieth century with the deconstructionist critic like George Wooten, John Goode. The other major contemporary development in Hardy studies was in the field of textual scholarship with the meticulously detailed

work of editors like Simon Gatrell, Juliet Grindle and Dale Kramer. Hardy's criticism takes a new turn with the publication of structuralist critic J Hillis Miller's *Thomas Hardy: Distance and Desire* (1970). Although there are considerable variations between individual critics, the wide divergences in critical method and approach have been opening up new possibilities in Hardy criticism. Padmanath Gohain Boruah's huge contribution towards Assamese literature is acknowledged and thereby recognized by many Assamese scholars like Harichandra Bhattacharya (1956), Birinchi Kumar Boruah (1964), Hem Boruah (1970), Prahlad Kumar Boruah (1973), Sailen Bharali (1975), Maheswar Neog (1978), Prafulla Katakya (1978), Lila Gogoi (1986), Nagen Saikia (1988), Hiren Gohain (1991), Homen Borgohain (1993), Gobinda Prasad Sarmah (1995), Mahendra Bora (1997), Satyendranath Sarmah (2004), Upendranath Sarmah (2012) and the Gohain Boruah Scholarship throughout the ages established him as a path finder of Assamese literary world particularly contributing to the world of Assamese novel. But regarding Padmanath Gohain Boruah though he was a historian too no scholarly write up yet observed the historian within this litterateur focusing on this particular aspect illuminating the historical insight shaping his novels. Though a strong linearity of scholarship of both the novelists has been perceived, in conjunction with historical turn, a comparative analysis of this Assamese novelist with a British novelist had not

been pursued before. So this research paper analyzes with textual reference the historical impulse behind their narrative fabric and finds out new meaning in the theme presented in the form of different fables. Thus this perspective would give a better implication of their vision; hence this effort to study the novels in the light of a new perspective throws some light on the understanding of the novels discovering a unique pattern with historical turn.

### 3. Methodology

This paper is intended to explore the literary domain of Padmanath Gohain Boruah and Thomas Hardy in the light of New Historicism illuminating the historical moment and historicity of literary text. In New Historicism, literary work is considered a product of the time, place and historical circumstances and not an isolated work of art. Critic like Louis Montrose talks about the historicity of texts and textuality of history. Textuality of history refers to the fact that history writing is about interpreting the past for the sake of present. While formulating history, always it is written with the historian's present context and with its need in mind and historicity is the historical actuality of events engraved in a literary work--- conceptually historicity is the quality of being part of history which focuses on the true value of knowledge claims about the past. So, this study is an endeavour in this direction. Moreover, while interpreting, certain recourse is taken to the concept contrapuntal in relation to texts finding affinity to Edward Said's interpretation of "contrapuntal" in his book *Culture and*



*Imperialism*. The ‘contrapuntal way’—a new way of reading literary text as stated by Said, “Such readings rest upon the fact that any fiction refers to a complex of material, knits layers of meaning of complexities of life and reality that have been drawn from actual world--- actual people, places, institution, practices.” Reading contrapuntally implies moving back and forth between internal and external standpoint on the work’s imaginative projection based on reality/history. So, it is meant to interweave and mutually qualify sometimes superimpose the legitimate claims of internal or intrinsic readings of a text on the one hand and the claims of various external critique on the other creating a counterpoint to the narrative. While traditional reading cannot shed light on some hard truth of harsh historical moment, contrapuntal reading brings into fore such silenced narrative of real world and here lies the relevance of this study. Thus the present study is an attempt to arrive at a critical understanding of the Nineteenth century literary narrative illuminating the historical colouring within it reconstructing a unique trajectory of historicity of literary world to sing the unsung.

#### **4. Relevance of the research paper contributing to history**

It is attempted here to highlight how literary creation can give us glimpses of contemporary society, culture of that historical moment thereby simultaneously reconstructing a historical reality. Thus with a view to creating a history with an

objective eye, the less trodden world of Assamese novels at the very initial stage of its genealogy through the comparison of Gohain Boruah’s novel with Hardy’s work highlighting the basic thrust of comparative literature are to be considered here. The appeal of literary creation is universal irrespective of geographical social and cultural even temporal dimension. So, literature can be an adequate vehicle to create a sense of unity and brotherhood in this diverse world as it is the expression of human heart. In fact the basic objective of this research work is to explore the unexplored, to focalize the unilluminated aspects concentrating on its promising literary features in digging out the hidden historical facets mirroring cultural, social and even economic dimension of contemporary world tracing the historical trajectory. Thus, the fundamental impulse behind this investigation is to convey an overall idea of historical insight and reality as reflected in the literary scenario of the nineteenth century Assamese novels in relation to the nineteenth century British novels with particular reference to Padmanath Gohain Boruah and Thomas Hardy. So, this venture would create a new perspective of looking at history as history here is perceived taking a literary turn simultaneously in a polyphonic way literary world also is impacted by the historicity of actual world holding forth a unique, objective trajectory.

#### **5. Analysis**

LAHORI has been described by the author as LOKHIMI and it begins with a



historical moment—tyranny and torture of the Burmese “Maanor din”

Ajio sei durdanta maan-jatir asurik atyasaror kotha sunile sokulu tukibologiya hoi. Agor diniya burha manuhor mukhe sei atyasarot huwa asomiya manuhor dukh durgotir kotha sunile, ajioo lora suwali bhayat asthir hoi (Gohain Baruah, 419).

It talks about the first invasion of the Burmese. Thus at the very outset of the novel we get a lively description of Ahom days with some true personages from history such as Purnananda Burhagohain, Ruchinath Gohain, Badan Chandra Barphukan, Kirtinath Buragohain etc. But in the turmoil of Burmese tyranny a successful love story is developed in the plot of the novel – the love of Lahari and Kamal. Lahari was the daughter of Kirtinath Burhagohain designated as dekaphukan and his beautiful wife. Lahari was their precious daughter of that affluent family, because after much effort and treatment they were gifted with Lahari:

Kirtinath Gohainr bohudinor asha puron hobor agontuk milile.

Tar pasot, jotha soamayateor jnyawati aru gunawati bharjyar Pora eti sundor aru sulokhyana kanyar labh hol; Kirtinath aru teor

bharjyar antorot anadar sima nathaki (Gohain Barooah, 420).

Thus vivid picture of Ahom days is perceived here. The first chapter entitled Pampur depicts the childhood of Lahori. The second chapter entitled Rongpur is the description of history—and historical event

i.e. preparation of a secret conspiracy to demolish the kingship of Chandrakanta Simha entrusting this responsibility to Purandar Simha:

Kintu seibuli Ruchinath Buragohain dangoriya aukoniya hoi bohi nasil; teu tolet ole soinya-samonta gutai loi akou ujaboloi karbar korile. Chandrakanta Simha Swargadewak bhangi, Rajeswar Simha Swargodewar bongshor Purandar Simha Gohain dewak Raja patiboloi teu mone mone thikkorile. (GohainBarooah, 421)

In this chapter we get a description of another Ahom family—Santiram Gohain Boruah, his virtuous wife and son Kamal Gohain Baruah. Eventually the novel expresses love between Kamal and Lahori. Unlike the tragic end of Bhanumati, it declares triumph of love after much trial and suffering of both the protagonists—male and female. Particularly the female protagonist Lahori shows strength of her resolute mind personifying patience and endurance and here lies the uniqueness of her character in the backdrop of 19<sup>th</sup> century reality.

The novel *Far from the Madding Crowd* is intended as a pastoral tale by Hardy celebrating the vanishing rural life nostalgically. The focus of this fiction on rural life and environment fits in with the trend of new middle and upper classes of wanting to preserve old England and their anxiety that much of its cultural heritage could be lost forever if change continued. Hardy succeeded in his early intention of

writing *Far from the Madding Crowd* as “pastoral tale” because he wrote a novel about sheep and shepherds with a traditional subject matter in the traditional manner by portraying rural life nostalgically. The numerous pastoral scenes weave a rural texture in *Far from the Madding Crowd* and here Hardy’s knowledge of the agricultural world expresses itself in richly connotative prose.

In *Far from the Madding Crowd*, Gabriel Oak, the romantic and patient lover of Bathsheba Everdone is the chief representative of Hardy’s pastoral ideal, a “pastoral king” who retains a quiet authority partly through his associations with the values of an idyllic pastoral world. He naturally courts Bathsheba by taking a present of an orphaned lamb. However, the element of pastoral are rooted with realism in the rituals of the farming calendar such as sheep shearing and harvesting etc giving meaning to the life of agricultural community. The rhythms of agricultural life without change for hundreds of years against the transience of individual lives are implicit in the novel. Many chief characters of the novel have experienced transformation--Bathsheba, Oak, Fanny, Bold wood, Troy but the sheep washing and the sheep shearing go on. Thus celebration of past is a powerful and persistent in the narrative of the novel.

According to Benjamin, “Historicism depicts the ‘eternal’ picture of the past; the historical materialist, an experience with it, which stands alone” (Thesis XVI). Benjamin argues against the idea of an

“eternal picture” of history and prefers the idea of history as a self-standing experience. Thus, Benjamin states “It means to seize hold of a memory as it flashes up at a moment of danger” (Thesis VI). *Theses on the Philosophy of History*. Hardy in this novel wants to recreate and eternalize the ‘Rural England’, so here he makes the classic rural time scale in which the temporal chime with the eternal—the sense of permanence of a deep rooted past is heightened by the peasant characters.

Industrialization had negative impact on the Victorian world i.e. on an idealized agrarian England along with positive. Because, industrialization brought about evils of exploitation, pollution and urban squalor. As Birgit Plietzsch has suggested that rapid and constant social and economic transformation created an awareness among the new middle and upper class about protecting England’s cultural heritage. So, in the Victorian England a reverse development is seen, marked by a return to traditional culture, old social values. The ‘rural backwardness’ was no longer considered negative, rather rural space was seen as a place of stability, tranquillity. Because of this redefinition of Social Values, it is perceived the survival of rural culture and in the narration of the novel the historicity of spirit comes to be articulated and echoes of the past apprehended in such a way that the reader becomes suspended temporarily. Hardy exploits the intervention of the past through the plot device of the return and an insistent architectural description of the distant past.

## 6. Conclusion:

Keeping in view the presence rather recurrence of historic sense in both the novels of our concern, it can be said beyond any reasonable doubt that preservation of 'pastness' gives momentum to the poignancy of the novel. Gohain Barooah's *Lahoriis* based on the background of Ahom days refracts life and reality of past moments; as such history is the root of society reflecting culture. At the same time literature is also an instrument of aesthetic representation of life and reality. But in the process of aesthetic representation, literature is bound to be more real than true and history seems to be more true than real. In order to give an aesthetic dignity, any literary creation with affinity to historical facts has to be fictionalized. In this sense, interpretation of the novel *Lahori* with historical concern revitalizes the past and the fictionalized world became poignant and more

meaningful with this concern. Hardy's *Far from The Madding Crowd* also recreates the monuments of past and 'pastness' in his novel. Fast vanishing rural world appeared in this novel recurrently whereby glorifying the historic sense of the past. Past is an inevitable part of life and the present of a nation or race is always based on past. So, preservation of past articulates vitality and vigour of a race or nation. Thus, in both the novels fictional world becomes more meaningful with the illumination of the historical moments. At the same time both the novels express a vision of a better world transgressing the sufferings in an antagonistic adverse world. Though both the novels are not historical novel as such, yet 'historicity' is preserved in the narration of both the novels and the author unfold the cultural and historical mediations in it.

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## Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Environment

*Special  
Commentary*

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### I

It is difficult to have one definitive definition of indigenous peoples. Some time they have been referred as “Adivasi” (original settlers) or ‘Dalits or ‘Semi tribal’ people. Interestingly, there has been dispute over exact meaning of the term ‘peoples’ also. Some scholars are not in favour of using the term ‘people’ in regard to indigenous peoples. Because it implies right of secession (Right to self-determination) and independent statehood. In fact, they are more comfortable with the words like tribe and populations. The covenant of the League of Nations referred to non-self-governing or colonized peoples as “indigenous people”. In 1951, the international labour organization’s convention No. 107 has defined indigenous people as “those which having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies consider themselves distinct from other sectors of societies now prevailing in those territories” (N.Jayapalan, 2000).

Due to confusion over the definition of indigenous people, the UN. The World Bank and the International Law apply four criteria to distinguish indigenous people.

- a) This group, live within geographically distinct ancestral territories.

- b) They tend to maintain distinct social, economic and political institutions within their territories.
- c) They typically aspire to remain distinct culturally, geographically and institutionally rather than assimilate fully in to national society.
- d) They self-identify as indigenous or tribal,

In the light these facts, it can be deduced that indigenous people are those that have historically belonged to a particular region, before its colonization and have different cultural, linguistic, traditional cultural of that region or state.

Indigenous people are scattered all over the World. In some parts of the world, there are few indigenous people, while in other parts, they may number into the hundreds of thousands. At present they are covering 70 countries World Wide. Over the years, many indigenous groups have been wiped out due to diseases and policies of extermination.

Over a long period of time, the indigenous people have been demanding certain specific rights for themselves. These are:

- (i) Right to self-determination (the human rights concept of self-determinations could result in any group qualifying as a “people” and being allowed to establish their own country or self-governing unit- Elisabeth Reicher, 2003).
- (ii) Right to ownership, control, management of traditional territories, lands and natural resources.
- (iii) Right to preserve their social orders and cultures without external domination or interference.
- (iv) Right to govern, use, manage, regulate, recover, conserve and renew water sources without interference.
- (v) Right to maintain their distinct political, economic and legal systems, while maintaining a right to participate in these systems within the state.
- (vi) Right to maintain their distinct political, economic and legal systems, while maintaining a right to participate in these systems within the state.

On June 29, 2006, The United Nations Human Rights Council adopted the UN Draft Declaration on the rights of the indigenous peoples. The Declaration emphasizes the right of indigenous people to maintain and strengthen their institutions, culture, traditions and to pursue their development in accordance with their aspirations and needs. Unfortunately, this draft declaration was not accepted by the countries like US, Australia and New Zealand, despite the opposition of these countries, the UN General Assembly eventually adopted the Declaration on September 10, 2007.

Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the USA voted against the Declaration. While 143 nations voted in favour of it. Now, attempt has been made in several countries to protect the rights of the indigenous people. In India also, the article 46 of Directive principles of State Policy provides for the promotion of the interest of indigenous people. At present there are 60 million Adivasi Communities in India.

Despite the recognitions of these rights by the UNO, the interest of the indigenous people have been undervalued and at times deliberately marginalized by the state or other agencies. Displacement, land alienation, depletion of water sources, impoverishment, cultural and identity crisis have marked the recent history of the indigenous people of India. Tribes are at the verge of losing their rights on land. Another threat to the indigenous people is deforestation. Deforestation has resulted in soil erosion and thermal contamination of water. Since forest economy is essentially a women’s economy, the economy of deforestation is felt more by tribal women. On the other hand, dam projects, have threatened their way of life.

In the face of these violations, the indigenous people have rebelled from time to time to establish their rights. Some of the notable movements of the indigenous people of India are Narmada Bachao Andolan, Anti land alienation and Forest protection agitation. Basically, the struggle of the indigenous people centre around the issues of land, forests, water, culture, communication and identity etc.



Indigenous people aspiring for a situation, where there will not be any cultural subjugation, economic exploitation and politico-socio marginalization.

## II

The economic, social, religious and cultural life of indigenous peoples are very much dependent on the traditional environment. This environment is under threat from dominant and exploitative groups. This very environment includes human beings, plants, animals, water, soil, air, land, oil and other elements available on the earth. The welfare of the indigenous people and sound environment are interlinked with each other. Of late, there is a depending environmental crisis all over the world. Environmental degradation in terms of greenhouse gases, carbon dioxide emission, thinning of ozone layer and deforestation have been a threat to the wellbeing of indigenous people. Therefore, in recent times the concept of the right to safe and clean environment has emerged as a basic human rights (A.U. Yasin and A. Upadhyay, 2004). The government of India has given a constitutional status to environmental protection. Part IV of the Indian constitution declaration that the state shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment by safeguarding the forests and wild life of the country.

Some environmentalists are critical of indigenous people's treatment of the environment specially in connections with deforestation. But other have argued that many indigenous people for decades have

accumulated important knowledge and traditions that allow them to work with nature rather than to destroy it. The potentially high economic value of pharmaceuticals derived from medicinal plants used by indigenous people generates interest on this issue. The interesting fact is that now MNC's have been indulged in "biopiracy" whereby biological resource used by indigenous communities openly for generation have been patented. Thereby the indigenous people have been deprived to use own local plants and other sources.

One noted Indian scientist and activist Vandana Shiva commented, "Biopiracy and patenting of indigenous knowledge is a doubt theft, because first it allows theft of creativity and innovation and secondly the exclusive right established by patents on stolen knowledge steal economic option of every survival of the basis of our indigenous biodiversity and indigenous knowledge. Overtime, the patents can be used to create monopolies and make everyday products highly priced" (Anup Shah, 2007). As for example, in Texas a company called Rice Tea took out the patents on Basmati rice and have created genetically modified Basmati rice, while selling it is a normal Basmati. At present, there were more than 100 Indian plants awaiting grants at the US patent office.

Presently, the most vulnerable communities to climate change are indigenous people occupying marginal rural environments. Climate change will result in increased frequency and severity of storms, floods, draught and water



shortage. It has been already found that water is being polluted into destructive uses through the diversion and damming of water system, mineral extraction and mining of ground water for industrial and commercial purposes. Realizing the gravity of the situation, the Indigenous People Water Declaration was made on 18 March 2003 at Japan. Through this declaration, the indigenous people challenged government ownership of water, construction of large infrastructures, corporatization, the privatization and commoditization of water. The 3<sup>rd</sup> World Water Forum, Kyoto, declared “our relationship with our lands, territories and water is the fundamental physical cultural and spiritual basis for our existence... We assert our role as caretakers with rights and responsibilities to defend and ensure the protection, availability and purity of water. We stand united to follow and implement our knowledge and exercise our right of self-determination to preserve our water and to preserve life” (Indigenous Peoples Kyoto Water Declaration, htm.)

It seems the climate change, logging, dam projects and other environmental degradation have adversely affected the indigenous people.

### III

The North-East India is the region which consists of a large number of tribal populations with different languages, beliefs, cultures, customs and traditions. Out of seven North-Eastern states, the tribal people are majority in four states and in the remaining three states also tribal people

have a very significant presence. On the other hand, North-East India is recognized as one of the twelve biodiversity hot spots in the world. (Biodiversity is the variability among living organisms including diversity within and between species and ecosystems—O.P. Singh, 2003)

In Assam, the river Brahmaputra and its tributaries are the life line of indigenous people. The Brahmaputra valley is crisscrossed with a huge number of rivers, large and small as well as streams and rivulets. The Brahmaputra is fed on its course through the Valley no less than 57 tributaries on its North bank and 33 on its South. The tribal people of Assam like Kachari, Lalung, Mishing, Dimas, Rabha, Garo, Chutia and Moran etc are living on the both sides of river Brahmaputra and its tributaries (Anup Dutta, 2001). The water and fishes are the life support system of these indigenous people.

Unfortunately, the North Eastern region is facing several problems of environmental contamination. The rate of air, water and soil contamination is increasing day by day. Deforestation, irrational use of natural resources, erosion of traditional values and lack of awareness aggravated the situation. Of late, the river Brahmaputra and its tributaries have been polluted by the industrial wastes, village wastes, dumping ground of urban filth and plastic materials. The oil spill on the rivers deters the growth of green foliage. As a consequence of it, the sweet water fishes have virtually become extinct. (Zahid Hussain, 2003)

Another potential threat to the lives of indigenous people of North East India is that the Govt. of India is planning to convert North East India into a power house by trapping its hydro power potential to the maximum. These mega dams project will definitely have impact on the biodiversity and on lives of indigenous people of North East India. Noted social scientist, Monirul Hussain has given a detailed critical report on such projects. Here, one such report has been produced in verbatim. "One such proposed mega dam project on the river Pagladiya. The Pagladiya is one important tributary of the Brahmaputra. The construction of dam, roads, reservoir and canals will lead to displacement of about 1 lakh five thousand people from their land and homes. About 3400 across of land will be acquired for the project. This will directly affect their livelihood. Most of the potential victims are poor peasants and a large number of them are tribal, mostly Bodes". (Monirul Hussain, 2008)

"Another recently completed Rangamati Hydro electric project under NEEPCO located in Arunachal Pradesh has highly proved defective. The project diverted the river Rangamati through a 9 kilometer long tunnel to the river Dikrong. Consequently the quantum of water in the river Dikrong has increased substantially including heavy floods in the downstream of Lakhimpur district regularly. On the other hand, river Ranganadi which is the life line of many people including Mishing tribe of Lakhimpur district has virtually dried up as a results of diversion. The diversion on

Rangannadi has affected the community life of Miching in Lakhimpur and Dhemaji district very significantly". (M. Hussain)

Of late, there is grass roots resistant against displacement of population and environment degradation in the entire North East region. Various civil society groups like environment groups, right groups and the press have demonstrated concern about the right of indigenous people. Recently a day long convention was held a Guwahati under the Chairmanship of noted intellectual Hiren Gohain, which emphatically opposed the draft water policy of the state government. Their main demand was that consent of the indigenous people should be a mandatory before constructing any major dam on their soil (The Assam tribune, 20.10.2008) Monirul Hussain rightly observed, when he said, "mobilization for such movement is likely to bring to the force the issue of survival and livelihood, human right, community rights, environment issues and popular participation in the development discourse. It seems that this kind of politics is slowly and steadily roots in the North East".

The struggle of human rights of the indigenous people is not yet over. A slow process is however raising hope for a more comprehensive set of rights. Certain steps address the problem adequately

- (i) Indigenous social workers and organizations can play an effective role in defining problems and developing solutions for indigenous people.

- (ii) The Central and state governments must be vigilant and seek to avoid exploitations of indigenous people and formulate policies that would prevent any economic project which will encroach upon their basic human rights,
- (iii) Environment education must be given to the indigenous people in various forms, such as lectures, exhibition, documentaries on forest and its resources.

It is true that the plight of the indigenous people remains unarticulated as they are unable to assert their rights and collective voice forcefully. Full collective voice and collective rights over their land and resources are essential for

the survival of indigenous people. As an example, a tribal right decide whether a mining company / dam should be installed or not on its land make sense as collective right. One concluding observation is that if human rights apply to all, then should self-determination occupy a primary role in human rights of indigenous people? Is it not better to ensure the economic, social, cultural right of everyone rather than encouraging 'peoples' to separate themselves from the mainstream society? It needs more debate on this sensitive/volatile issue.

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## Literature from Hill Tribes of North East India: An Emerging Trend in Indian English literature with special reference to EasterineKire's novel "Bitter Wormwood"

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### Abstract

North East India is a melting pot of diverse culture which is why it is often called India in miniature or mini-India. Therefore, the literature from North East India is multilingual. Accordingly, the literature from North East India represents the diverse culture of the various people in the region. Among others, the search for identity by the different hill tribes is one of the dominant themes in the literary works penned by the indigenous authors from the region in general and from the hill states in particular. Moreover, the political situation of the region as the backdrop of such literary works also stands tall. Therefore, cultural identity, political identity, identity crisis, and a critical look into such issues and the consequences thereof from various perspectives does form the big story of the North East India literature from the hill states, namely and mainly, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and parts of Assam and Tripura. One among them is the novel "Bitter Wormwood" by EasterineKire who hails from Nagaland, one of the North Eastern Indian states. This paper attempts to study the novel "Bitter Wormwood" as representing the literary expression of its kind from the Hill Tribes of North East India.

**Keywords:** North East India, Hill Tribes, literature, culture, identity.

### 1. Introduction

The hill people of North East India includes, in present-day nomenclature and to mention a few, the Nagas, Mizos, Kukis, Hmars, Dimasas, Paites, Darlong, Biates, Hrangkhols etc. and all of these scattered in all the Indian States of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim. In terms of population, most of

these hill tribes are minority except in a few states listed above.

All these tribes are in their search for separate cultural identity and political identity. In spite of their claim to be separately identified, some tribes are in fact groups of the same tribe. In terms of culture, many of the tribes mentioned above, are basically the same. History would have its explanation of how they have arrived and settled down in this part

of the world. Moreover, politics over time also would play a significant part in their being divided and scattered across the region.

Consequently, the literary pieces of these hill tribes over the years, especially in recent times, pour out the feelings, the thinking, the aspiration, the struggles, the search, the quest and many more of these hill people in the region. One such literary piece, which has been selected as a representative text for this paper is the novel *Bitter Wormwood* by Easterine Kire. The novel is being included in the syllabus for MA in English under Dibrugarh University.

## 2. Objectives of the paper

- i) To tell the fact that literature of the Hill Tribes of North East India is a new trend in Indian English Literature in general and in the literature from North East India in particular;
- ii) To show the kind of literature produced by the Hill Tribes of North East India;
- iii) To highlight the unique feature of literature of and by the Hill Tribes of North East India.
- iv) To encourage research papers of this kind in more numbers

## 3. Delimitation of the paper

Due to time constraint the scope of the paper is narrow and limited. It could not be comprehensive in terms of coverage of the study taken up by the researcher. The study for the paper confines to a particular text, therefore the analytical and

description part of the paper lacks wider references it could have otherwise.

## 4. Methodology

A particular text has been selected as a special reference as well as primary source and accordingly analytical and descriptive method has been used. Secondary sources helped in the close reading and analysis of the primary text. The author himself being belonging to one of the hill tribes of North East India, his close observations over the last at least 20 years have been taken into account.

The focus during the study of the primary text has been on the common features of the literature from the hill tribes. Therefore, the themes of the novel which are unique to the particular group the novel presented are ignored in order to avoid unfounded generalisations.

## 5. Discussion on the findings

The novel *Bitter Wormwood* (2011) by Easterine Kire, who hails from the Naga Hills, and currently living in Norway, presents the struggle for separate nationhood by the Nagas in the last 60 years. It covers three generations reflecting the changes over the years.

On close reading of the novel, it is found that in spite of the political promises or betrayals and also in spite of the infightings among the Nagas vis-à-vis the hill tribes of North East India, one thing has remained unchanged, that is, the cultural identity of the people. The physical built-up, the food items, the customary practice, the social setup and the likes, as compared to that of their fellow

citizens in other parts of India, has remained unique and different in spite of assimilations and adaptations.

It is also found that 60 years long have passed since the start of the freedom struggle by the Nagas but the enthusiasm, if not the movement, for the same has not died down until recently. Therefore the search for political identity, the yearnings for separate nationhood has continued till the present day. The same nationalism has also cost a huge loss of precious lives, and, also hardships, divisions etc. came out of the same, but then the longing to belong to one's homeland has not loosened its clutch.

Statehood has been given by the name of Nagaland way back in 1963 which has brought changes and challenges over the years, yet that has also not quenched the inner thirst of the people in the Naga Hills. As the novel portrayed, there has been a lot of changes and transitions in the minds and politics of these hill people, yet something has remained unanswered.

The novel '*Bitter Wormwood*' covers almost everything that can be thought of about the Naga problem since the time of the British Rule in India till the present day. It begins with the space and time when the innocent and peaceful Naga people lived in their ancestral hill country where they had their kingdoms, much to their satisfaction no matter how small the kingdoms were. They were quite happy and satisfied in their own ways because they did have things of their own. In other words, their identity and culture was intact.

The novel takes the reader soon to the freedom struggle of the Nagas which roughly started as soon as India got independence from the British Rule. The reader of the novel is also soon informed of the reality that the British did not settle down the exclusivity of the Nagas from mainland India and that they were supposed to be a separate nation.

The novel one after another presented the new things as well as the transformations that had befallen the Naga people till the Indian Government settled down or put a halt to their movement for a separate nation with Nagaland declared as one of the states of India in the year 1963.

The novel also showed that the high hope that the Nagas had in Mahatma Gandhi who, according to them, had understood their problem and had agreed to their claim of a separate national identity but then that very hope of becoming a separate nation became unfulfilled due to the death of the latter. This very picture shown by the novel is also what makes the account of the Naga freedom struggle quite different from that of popular media reports then and now on the Naga issue, the latter hardly seen presenting the Indian side ever supporting the claimed separate national identity of the Nagas.

The novel also gives a faithful account of the infightings among the Naga freedom fighters ever since the attainment of statehood. Taking both outsider and insider perspectives, the author of the novel honestly reveals how the fight for a true cause has been over the years more and more drifting away off road to the extent



that factionalism among the underground groups has linked up to the social evils among a large section of the present day youth coinciding with many socio-political factors.

In another aspect, the novel looks into the Naga problem from multiple angles by not blaming any side exclusively in such a way as to show what has weakened the right cause of the Naga struggle which, according to the novel, had started honestly and enthusiastically by the first generation of the freedom fighters. The responses on the part of the Indian Government and the impact of factionalism of the underground groups, the difficulty to arrive at a consensus among the over ground civilians, the difference in opinion with those who continues with armed struggle, all these have been taken into account.

The later part of the novel takes the reader to interesting characters with distinctive personality and opinion on the crux of the Naga problem. The views, opinions, and philosophy of these different characters are presented as the probable solutions to the Naga problem.

The metaphor of the novel which is the title of the novel itself beautifully speaks a lot about the need of the hour. The author seems to conclude that in the same manner as the herb Bitter Wormwood was used to heal their wounds and cuts in the forest and therefore gave them peace, the ultimate solution to their present day problems would also be nothing more than their old but simple and original culture.

More or less the same is the condition among the other hill tribes of the region

like the Mizos, the Hmars, the Kukis etc. and accordingly the same things are expressed in their literature. Even in the literary pieces which do not clearly present the life, culture, and politics of the people, like the novel “Bitter Wormwood” does, the backdrop of such literary pieces are often the longing for one’s homeland, the yearnings for nationhood, the search for identity, and the frustration over being regarded as ‘others’, for instance.

Literary texts from these hill people generally portray the feelings and longings in their hearts which is nothing more than the desire to uphold their own culture and separate identity and to become one among the many nations in the world.

## 6. Conclusion

Literary works like the novel “Bitter Wormwood” are part and parcel of North East Indian Literature from and by the hill tribes of this part of India called North East India. The significance of this novel and other literary texts of the same kind lie in the representations they carry.

The hill people are scattered in different parts of the region which makes them minority because of being separated by state boundaries. Hence, the search for both political and cultural identity, the urge to become majority, the ambition of forming a big nation, gets stronger and stronger. All these are represented in the literature of the hill people.

Advancement in education also enhances the representation through literature; therefore more and more literary



texts like the novel “Bitter Wormwood” have come up. Moreover, with the progress in the socio-economic sphere, and also in other walks of life, the literary output concerning the hill people of the region, especially by themselves, has increased.

Consequently, the inclusion of the literature of the hill people in the syllabi has become an emerging interface in the literary studies under School of Humanities so far as North East India is concerned. Therefore, the fact that literary works from the hill people of North East India has become quite established as a new trend in Indian English Literature in general and

Literature from North East India in particular.

### 7. Suggestion

Literary texts from the various groups of the hill people of North East India may be included more and more in the syllabus of the universities and/or colleges in the region. This shall ensure adequate representation of North East India with its rich cultural diversity. And the same would also ensure adequate representation of the rich literature from North East India in all its uniqueness and beauty in the ever growing Indian English Literature.

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## Exploring Shanta Myth through the Trajectory of Feminism: A Select Reading of Anand Neelakantan's "Shanta" and Kavita Kane's *Sita's Sister*

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### Abstract

The *Ramayana*, for its extravagant storyline and larger than life characters, holds a universal appeal and is cherished by an entire nation since ages. However, there have been many examples where the deeds of select male characters of the epic are exaggerated to attract the reader's attention and, except for propagating certain misogynistic notions of female chastity and *Stree Dharma*, female characters are largely overlooked. Some of these women, even though the narrators have used them for fulfilling the interests of the menfolk, are made invisible in such a way that the readers are not even aware of their existence. One such character is Shanta, the daughter of Dasaratha and the elder sister of Rama. While the traditional authors have always glorified and revered Rama, his sister Shanta has not even been acknowledged by them. She has been treated as the 'other' because mythology itself, having been dominated by those ideas which benefit men, has become a victim of patriarchy. However, the reading and rereading of ancient scriptures and its multiple representations tend to subvert the dominant ideologies and connect myths with contemporary issues. Therefore, in the era of revisionist mythological narratives, a number of re-tellers have given voice to the previously ignored female characters of the epic. While they have re-explored characters like Sita, Mandodari, Kaikeyi, Surpanakha and even Manthara in new shades, very few of them seem to have adopted a sensitive approach towards Shanta. Anand Neelakantan and Kavita Kane have proved themselves to be exceptional in this regard since both of them, especially the former, have given an emotional description of Shanta's life experiences and her feelings towards her family members. The objective of this paper is to closely analyse Neelakantan's "Shanta" and Kane's *Sita's Sister* and to re-evaluate Shanta's character through a feminist studies approach.

**Keywords:** Ramayana, Shanta, Revisionist Mythmaking, Feminism.

The *Ramayana*, for its extravagant holds a universal appeal and is cherished storyline and larger than life characters, by an entire nation since ages. From *Vedic*

times to modern and postmodern period, men and women of all generations in India are so familiar with the epic that it has become a part of their consciousness. However, as we live in a patriarchal society, there have been many examples where the deeds of select male characters of the epic are exaggerated to attract the reader's attention and, except for propagating certain misogynistic notions of female chastity and *Stree Dharma*, female characters are largely overlooked. Some of these women, even though the narrators have used them for fulfilling the interests of the menfolk, are made invisible in such a way that the readers are not even aware of their existence. One such character is Shanta, the daughter of Dasaratha and the elder sister of Rama. Having analysed Shanta's image in traditional narratives, this paper attempts to explore how Shanta myth has been recreated in two oppositional retellings of the *Ramayana*.

The *Valmiki Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Odia Ramayana* and some South Indian folklores have mentioned Shanta, true, but she has only been celebrated for the sacrifices that she has made. In popular culture, Surpanakha is branded as an evil woman as, instead of displaying coyness and hiding behind veils, she demands physical intimacy from Rama and Lakshmana. On the contrary, despite Shanta's role as a seductress, her story has not been circulated as a cautionary tale, probably because this very act on her part was favourable to the male characters of the story. More importantly, she plays the catalyst for Rama's birth, without whom

the *Ramayana* would not have existed. But she has been pushed to the margin of discrimination and treated as the 'other' since ages.

In the *Valmiki Ramayana* or in the *Mahabharata*, Shanta is treated as an almost invisible character. It is not clear if she is the daughter of Dasaratha or Romapada, who happens to be the king of *Anga Pradesh*. As sage Rishyasringa helps in bringing rain in drought-prone *Anga*, Romapada bestows Shanta on him as a reward. The male writers have praised her for being obedient to her father and her husband, the two authoritative bodies of her life. Years later, Dasaratha requests Romapada to allow Rishyasringa and Shanta to come to *Ayodha* so that the sage can conduct *Putrakameshti Yagya* on his behalf to ensure the birth of a male heir to the *Ayodha* throne. His request is granted, as a result of which Rama, Lakshman, Bharata and Shatrughna are born in due course. However, in these male centric canonical texts, Shanta is a mute doll who has given no active role to play.

It is in some South Indian folklores where, for the first time, Shanta has been given a prominent role as the sister-in-law of Sita. For instance, in a Telegu woman's song, Shanta teases Urmila for her prolonged sleep for fourteen years. While Shanta jokingly remarks that Sita and her sisters have allured her brothers by their physical charm, Sita smilingly replies that if Shanta had not been an expert in the art of love-making, she could not have enticed a virgin sage. But the seemingly friendly

tone of this bittersweet argument cannot suppress the internal conflict of *Nanad-Bhabi* relationship in an Indian household. Moreover, Shanta eavesdrops on Lakshman and Urmila's private conversation to know whether Urmila is bad-mouthing her in-laws. In "The Song of Urmila's Separation", V Narayana Rao aptly argues—

Shanta is a relatively unknown character in Valmiki's text, but as Rama's sister, she has a fully developed role in women's Ramayanas. A husband's sister, called *adapaducu* in Telegu kinship terms, has a role that could smoothen the transition of a bride from her parent's family to her parent-in-law's family. As a woman she can be closer to the bride than her own husband, and almost always belongs to the same age group as the bride. She can also be a mild authority figure since she is closer to the husband. (18)

Another woman's re-telling, "Letters from Lady Sita" by Tamil author Kumudini, written in the form of letters from Sita to her mother Sunaina, mentions Shanta when Sita informs her mother that she wants a sky-blue *Saree* like that of Shanta but, on coming to know that blue colour fades away easily, she changes her mind. Here, Sita and Shanta seem to be two common Indian women, having informal conversations on *Sarees*. However, despite being a visible character in these narratives, Shanta makes an appearance as an ordinary and domesticated woman. These narrators have not thrown light on the trials and

tribulations that she has faced for being born as a woman in a man's world.

In the era of revisionist mythological narratives, a number of re-tellers have given voice to the previously ignored female characters of the epic. Among them, Anand Neelakantan and Kavita Kane have adopted a sensitive approach towards Shanta and have given an emotional description of Shanta's life experiences and her feelings towards her family members in their subversive retellings. Therefore, the objective of the paper is to closely analyse Neelakantan's "Shanta" and Kane's *Sita's Sister* and to re-evaluate Shanta's character through a feminist studies approach.

In "Shanta", Neelakantan narrates the saga of an undesired girl child oscillating between unpleasant memories and equally crude realities and experiencing forced marginalization in which she remains trapped for ever. Despite being a man himself, Neelakantan has flawlessly captured and recorded the emotions of a woman. Having expressed his disappointment on the chauvinistic norms of a so-called prosperous kingdom, he shows how the one-sided doctrines purposefully neglect the worth of a woman. Though Neelakantan's protagonist Shanta is fortunate enough to lead the luxurious lifestyle of a princess, her father makes her feel insignificant and unwanted since her childhood. Just because she is a girl child, her old-school father, obsessed with the desire of having a son to pursue his legacy, never acknowledges her. The

conservative society of *Saket* also does not count her as Dasaratha's inheritor and treats him as a childless person as Shanta would not be allowed to rule the kingdom in future.

Though Shanta is Kaushalya's biological daughter, the so-called pious mother, engrossed in religious activities for producing a male heir, deliberately ignores her. But Kaikeyi showers Shanta with motherly affection and teaches her horse-riding, archery, politics and thus grooms her for the position of the future crowned-head. At Kaikeyi's suggestion, Shanta holds private court for supporting the subjects. She defies patriarchy in the sense that she rejects the laws prescribed by the composers of the *Dharmasastras* and, based on her feminine instinct and perception of right and wrong, tries to solve the problems of the people. But Dasaratha and Vasistha are deadly against Shanta's free activities and they want to limit her movements to the four walls of her chamber. In a society where women are expected to pursue so-called feminine arts such as cooking, singing and dancing, the tyrannical father issues a royal decree to restrict his daughter from riding horses in public. Through this story, Neelakantan subverts Dasaratha's traditional image as a good and just king and portrays him as a misogynist whose rigid ideologies crash his daughter to the core.

Dasaratha does not hesitate to give Shanta to king Romapada when he comes to know that if Shanta manages to bring Rishyasringa into mainstream society, the

sage would help him to have extraordinary sons. Shanta could have disobeyed Dasaratha and would have stayed in the palace as Kaikeyi's daughter, but she volunteers to help him instead. It is beneath her dignity to stay in the palace as an unwanted creature after her father has clearly indicated that he does not want her here. Having been forsaken by her biological parents, she feels tremendously hurt and she wishes to do something extraordinary that would help her to win their love, at least, gratitude. Probably she wants to prove that she is capable enough of performing difficult tasks, just like a son.

After Shanta starts a new life as the adopted daughter of Romapada, he provides her with the task of saving the people of *Anga* from becoming victims of drought. She is advised to seduce Rishyasringa Muni, the person who can bring rain to *Anga Pradesh*. Rishyasringa was the son of sage Vibhandaka who, after having been seduced by Urvashi, lost his focus from *Tapasya*. Considering womenfolk as the root of all evil, he developed intense hatred for his opposite sex and resolved that he would keep his son far away from women. Despite the fact that it was Indra who ordered Urvashi to distract Vibhandaka as his authority was threatened by the sage's meditation, Vibhandaka chose to vent his anger on Urvashi. Probably this is how women are used as pawns in the power-struggle of men and are made scapegoats for the sinister activities of those who are in power.

When Indra sends the *Apsaras* to the earth for seducing the sages, it is he who gets benefitted from it and the *Apsaras* are subjected to negative criticism for playing a part in securing Indra's supreme authority in the universe. Similarly, Dasaratha and Romapada wish to use Shanta as a substitute for the *Apsaras* or the *Devadasis* for accomplishing their own interests. Despite knowing that sage Vibhandaka might harm or even kill Shanta, they do not care for her safety. Her new mother Vershini consoles her that if she manages to make Rishyasringa fall in love with her, he would give her the status of his wife and thus Shanta would be able to protect her honour. If it does not happen, then the discussion on what possible consequences she might have to face remains unspoken in the story, but the reader does not have the difficulty in understanding that probably she would have to spend the rest of her life as a public woman as, in the conservative *Aryan* society, an unmarried woman's aggressive sexual behaviour is unacceptable and no man would agree to marry a so-called fallen woman. However, none of Shanta's two father figures seem to be concerned about her future. She realizes that—

Her father had sold her for a son. She was not a prostitute. She was the princess of Ayodha. No, she wasn't— a voice whispered from inside her. She was no princess. It does not matter whether she was born as the princess of Ikshvaku or in the home of a pauper. She was just a woman, to be pawned, to be sold away, to

be used as a seductress. She was worthless. (Neelakantan 41)

After Shanta marries Rishyasringa and reaches *Ayodha* with her husband, the people pity her for marrying a poor sage and giving up all sorts of luxuries. Dasaratha refuses to acknowledge any paternal bond with her as she has been given away in adoption and does not accept her *Pranam* as she, being the wife of the preceptor, is akin to his mother, thus rejecting her very existence.

In this story, the narrator celebrates female bonding through Shanta's relationship with Kaikeyi and Manthara. When Manthara meets with Shanta after a long time, she embraces her with motherly affection, enquires about her married life just like a mother does and blesses Shanta with her gold chain. In her letter to Shanta, Kaikeyi writes— “Ayodha does not deserve you. For your father's sake, I hope that at least one of us bears him a son. If it comes true, won't it be a sweet irony that it needed his daughter to fulfil his desperate need for a son?” (Neelakantan 58).

Another revisionist mythmaker Kavita Kane, known for giving voice to undervalued women in mythology, has portrayed Shanta as a minor character in *Sita's Sister*. However, the reader would be disappointed if he tries to find any similarity between Kane's Shanta and Neelakantan's Shanta. In her attempt to defend Dasaratha, Kane has depicted how he takes pity on Kaushalya's childless sister Vershini and, when her husband Romapada expresses his wish to raise



Shanta as his daughter, Dasaratha agrees for the adoption. He gives his consent because, being a *Kshatriya* of the *Raghu* dynasty, he is true to his commitments and therefore cannot take his words back, reminding the reader of the scene where he agrees for Rama's banishment against his wish. Though Neelakantan's Dasaratha sells his daughter for his greed of a son, Kane has tried to keep Dasaratha's traditional image intact. However, while expressing her opinion regarding how women get affected by their husbands' multiple marriages, Urmila comments that her father-in-law should not have married Kaikeyi and Sumitra for more children after Kaushalya has given birth to Shanta.

In Neelakantan's narrative, Shanta was exploited by the male characters and there was no room for her own wish. But, in *Sita's Sister*, she has been given the power to make her life decisions on her own. In order to protect *Anga Pradesh* from drought, it is she who decides to approach Rishyasringa. Conscious of her royal status, she chooses a trained prostitute for the purpose of seduction. When she goes to meet Rishyasringa along with the courtesan, the sage falls for the princess and marries her. While having a conversation with Urmila, Shanta praises her for her courage to face an angry sage like Vishwamitra and recalls that she also appeared her father-in-law in the same way.

The equation of Kaushalya and Kaikeyi's relationship with Shanta is shown in a completely different light in

these two stories. In *Sita's Sister*, Shanta despises her step-mother and is very much attached to her biological mother. She is also suspicious of her step-brother Bharata. Though Sumitra advises her to judge a person through a neutral perspective, she seems to be unmoved by her counselling. Also, she is not comfortable with the idea of stepping in the male territory and therefore she refuses to help Urmila regarding administrative matters when the state is in crisis. She is portrayed as a shallow, bitter, gossip-loving and conservative woman, thus resembling her mother Kaushalya.

Though Neelakantan and Kane have recreated and contemporized Shanta in their respective revisionist retellings, the two Shantas are completely different from each other. While Neelakantan's Shanta shows occasional rebellious spark and her poignant story moves the reader to the core, there is no such quality in Kane's Shanta that attracts the reader's attention. But it should be remembered that, while Neelakantan's story revolves around Shanta, in Kane's novel she is a minor character and probably this is the reason why Kane could not find enough scope for developing her character. However, two different re-tellers could definitely reinterpret the same character in two different ways in keeping with their motives and reconstruct her story irrespective of the intentions of the original creators of these myths. The reading and rereading of ancient scriptures and its multiple representations tend to subvert the dominant ideologies and connect myths

with contemporary issues. Neelakantan and Kane have employed different strategies in Shanta's character portrayal, true; but they share one thing in common in the sense that both of them brought a lost myth in the foreground and rewrote it in their own

unique way. The readers as well as the critics expect that many more fascinating stories about Shanta will be written in future and thus one day Shanta will become an integral part of the *Ramayana* tradition.

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## The Religious Festivals of the Tai Ahom Community:

### A Brief Survey

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#### Abstract

The Ahoms, originally were the descendants of the Shans, a branch of the famous Tai race. They entered Assam in the 13th century by crossing Patkai Hills under the leadership of Su-Ka-Fa and ruled for long 600 years in Assam. The Ahoms had their own religious beliefs and practices but also adopted the local languages and religious beliefs in the course of their long 600 years of rule. The Ahoms came with direct contact of Hinduism under Swargadeo Chudangpha or Bamuni Konwar in 1397-1407 and too adopted Vaishnavism in the tenure of Jaydhwas Singh (1648-1663). Apart from this adaptation they never discarded some of their original faiths as these are still observed by them. So, in this paper an attempt has been made to review these practices of Ahoms.

Keywords: Ahom, religious practice, original, tradition.

#### 1. Introduction

The Ahoms who ruled in Assam for six hundred years (1228-1826) came from Maulung, Upper Burma and was descendents of the Shans, a branch of the famous Tai race. Originally they lived in Mangolia and in some parts of China but due to the expansion of the Chinese Empire they gradually migrated to different parts of the continent. The Tai-Shans occupied the Mungri Mungram area of the Unan Province (now a part of China). Later on Mungri-Mungram was divided into two states: Mungri-Mungram and Maolung. The Ahoms under the leadership of prince Siu-Ka-Pha from the Maulung province entered Assom on 1228 AD and established their permanent capital at Choraideo on 1253 AD. The Ahoms brought with them their own language, literature, tradition, culture, religion,

customs and political-thoughts. At that time the Brahmaputra Valley was divided into small kingdoms ruled by local tribes; Moran, Borahi, Kachari, Chutia, Bhuyan, Laloong etc. Siu-Ka-Pha tried to win the hearts of the local people not one by defeating them into wars but by showing respect to their culture, religion, language and also establishing marital relations with them. The Ahoms came with direct contact of Hinduism under Swargadeo Shudangpha or the Bamuni Konwar in 1397-1407. He allowed the Brahman-priest to conduct the religious rituals in the Raj-palace according to the Hindu ways, which were earlier conducted by the Ahom priests; Deodhai, Mohan and Bailung. In the days of King Jaydhwas Singha (1648-1663), the religious-customs and practices of the Vaishnavism became a part of the Ahom religious life. He initiated Vaishnavism by

establishing the Satras at Majuli. At the tenure of the Dihingia Raja (1497-1539) under the leadership of Sankardeva and Madhavdeva the Non-Vaishnavism and local religious practices the Ahoms have continued to keep their customs and religious practices alive by observing them following the original traditions. Some of these rituals are Umpha, Me-Dam-Me-Phi, Dam, Rikkhan-Mungkhan, Jashingpha, Chaipha, Phuralung etc. Some of the rituals associated with marriage, death and birth are also observed following the traditional ways. In this paper efforts have been made to see how some of the religious festivals of Ahoms are still observed in Assam.

## 2. Objectives

This study aims to understand the mythical, philosophical and theological base of the religious rituals of the Tai Ahom community. An attempt is also made to understand the significance of some of the religious festivals which are still very much popular and which have revived despite the strong influence of Hinduism among the Tai-Ahom community.

## 3. Methodology

The data's collected for this study are based on primary source like field study and buranjis as per requirement of the study and secondary sources such as books. The method adopted for this study is analytical as well as descriptive.

## 4. Discussion

The Ahoms believe that there is one omnipotent God. According to the Ahom religious scripture "Lit Lai Peyn KaKa", "Phra" or the supreme spirit is the Lord of the universe, the Supreme Being, absolute and omniscient without any shape. The

concept of a shapeless God is unique in the sense that it needs a very advanced mind to conceive of such a religious philosophy. It is also stated in the Holy Scripture that the supreme spirit "Pha Tyu Ching Phrong Hum" created Gods and Goddesses to look after the universe. The most important God worshipped by the Ahoms in each and every religious ritual is Lengdon. Different religious scriptures give the guidelines for the religious rituals to be performed by the Ahoms in their traditional religion. The priestly classes of the Ahoms; Mohans, Deodhals, Bailungs, and Chirings are the actual practitioners of the various rituals and despite the influence of Hinduism they have kept the customs and traditions alive till date. Now- a -days the most popular Ahom religious rituals are Me-Dam-Me-Phi and Chak-Lang ceremony. The ancestor worship is the manifestation of this thought that godliness is associated with men and after death this spirit of godliness becomes "Phi" or "God". The ritualistic sacrifices associated with the Gods and Goddesses as well as spirits are indicative of their importance in Ahom religious belief.

### 4.1 Me-Dam-Me-Phi Ritual

In the philosophy of Ahom religion the concept of the linkage of the earthlings with heaven is very pronounced. The first Ahom king Siu-Ka-Pha traced his genealogy from the presiding deity Lengdon. It is written in the Ahom Buranji that the forefathers of the Tai-Ahoms were heaven born and were sent down to earth preceding the heavenly kings Khun-Lung and Khun-lai who came down from heaven by a ladder to rule on earth at the command of their grandfather lengdon. In almost all the traditional societies in the world the

worship of the ancestors is prevalent in their own characteristic ways. The Ahoms who originally came from Maolung of South China in 1228 AD also observed this traditional worship. Tai Ahoms are a branch of Tai Long or Big Tai or Thai. This belief in the divinity of the dead is an ancient one and all the Tai people worship the ancestors as Gods.

The ancestor worship among the Ahoms is called Me-Dam-Me-Phi. Me-mean worship, Dam means dead and phi-means God; that is dead are worshipped as God by Ahoms. This ritual is observed personally as well as publicly. According to Ahom belief after death a person remains in the state Dam and only after the relatives of the person worship Gods and Goddess and offer sacrifices the dead become a 'phi' or God and goes to heaven. They believe that the heaven into several provinces and each clan has its own village or town in the heaven. Under each God or Goddess remains the 'phi' or the souls. In this ritual only the heavenly spirits Chao-Phi and Dam-Cho-Phi are worshipped not the change-Phi or the Griha-Dams who are believed to dwell on this world. It was Swargadeo Siu-Ka-Pha who first introduced the Me-Dam-Me-Phi festival in this part of the country. There are historical references of yearly observance of Me-Dam-Me-Phi by all the Ahom kings from Siu-ka-pha before Swargadeo Jaydwaj Singha. To get rid of bad-times or to overcome crisis situations with the blessing of the gods and the heavenly-spirits the Ahom kings and the common Ahoms used to observe this ritual. Ten Gods and

Goddesses (Khaokham<sup>1</sup>, Ai lengdin<sup>2</sup>, Janshai-hung<sup>3</sup>, Pha-NuruLengdon<sup>4</sup>, Chitlam Cham<sup>5</sup>, Mutkum Tai Kum<sup>6</sup>, Jashingpha<sup>7</sup>, Dam Chao Phi, and Ra-Khin) are worshiped in this religious ceremony. The Ahoms observe their rituals in two different ways: Phra Lung and Ban Phi. In the Phra-Lung system the worship is done by making alter of eight corners on which fruits are offered to the Gods. In the Ban-Phi system ten maihangs (raised platforms) on the name of each God is prepared with offerings of meat, eggs, fluffy-rice, mustard oil, salt and ginger mixed rice. In this ceremony, altar for the dead spirits are made and offerings are made in front of the altar. The main offerings are Basil leaves, betel nuts, rice grain, duck egg, Chinkara flowers, chicken egg, rice bear, earthen lamp, fine rice, ginger etc. All the articles including copper coins, silver coins are offered on banana leaves. Three priests conduct prayers and the gathering takes part in it. Then the priests chanting mantras sprinkle Holi (purified) water over the articles offered for the deities and the Damphi. It is believed that if the close kin or the society as a whole observe this ritual of ancestor worship, the dead ones,

<sup>1</sup>Khaokham is the lord of water or God of water.

<sup>2</sup> God of Earth and God of seven worlds.

<sup>3</sup> Guru of the world, heaven and earth and guru of the Gods.

<sup>4</sup> King of the heaven and Lord of the living and non-living world.

<sup>5</sup> Sons of Lengdon, Lords of the seven worlds.

<sup>6</sup>Light and heat giver to the world.

<sup>7</sup> Goddess of learning and knowledge and the creator of the first letter in the alphabet.

particularly the parents and grandparents come down from heaven to earth to bless their sons, daughters, grandchildren and others after the ceremony. According to the Tai calendar on the month of Dinching (Aghon Mah) the New-year begins. So the Tai's believe that if the gods and the forefathers spirits are worshipped in the month then good luck prevails throughout the year. Today Me-Dam-Me-Phi is observed as a worship of the ancestors as well as it has got the status of a public festival. All the other communities of Assam also take part in this ritual and this traditional ritual of the Ahom community has transcended its limit and is now considered as a festival of unity and brotherhood.

#### **4.2 Dam Chang Phi (Na purush ritual)**

Dam Chang Phi means nine generations of the dead spirits of the ancestors starting from sixth generation to fourteenth generation are worshipped. They are not treated as ChangPhi (Gods of the heaven) but as DamPhi (Dead Spirits of the family). The ritual of Na Purush is celebrated once in every ten years for worshipping the DamPhi on nine generations. Nine devotees (Bhakat) are invited from nine Khels (clans) and the family offers feast with nine varieties of dishes along with the meat of a pig. The provisions required for this ritual are a pig, to fowls, juggary and soft rice Rahilao (homemade liquor) and nine varieties of dishes for nine devotees nine raised platforms are made of cane and bamboo. On each mehenga on a banana leaf, cooked rice and nine dishes are placed. The feet of the devotees are washed by the head of the family. They are treated like Gods and are offered one mehenga to each. The devotees

sing prayers on the name of gods and give their blessings to the family.

#### **4.3 New harvest ritual (Na Khowa)**

The priestly classes of Tai Ahom community celebrate the Bohag Bihu and Magh Bihu by worshipping their ancestors. Magh bihu marks the celebration of the completion of harvesting. During Magh there is the ceremony of Bihu when rice cakes (Pithas) and rice bears are offered to the dead spirits who are called Dam-Phi. In this ritual people offer eatables in the main house where the kitchen is located. The family worships Na-Dam, the Dead spirit of parents, Ghai Dam, the principal dead spirit of grandparents, Chiren-Dam (the collective dead spirits of the elders such as great grandparents). The new dead spirits become the principal dead spirits when the sons of the new also die.

It is believed that the dead spirits want offerings and worship from the living ones. The household spirits if worshipped properly with respect by the living ones of the family protect them and shower their blessing on the clan. Every family has four or six maihangs (raised platforms) on which the offerings are given to the ancestors. Vegetables, cooked fishes, meat, cooked new rice, sticky rice, homemade liquor are offered on the platforms. For Lengdon and other Gods in heaven rice liquor (Rahilao), betel nut wrapped with the sacred Chinkara flower are offered on the maihangs. The members of the family offer their prayers and salute to the ancestors and God and take blessings.

#### **4.4 Umpha Worship**

Umpha worship was done under royal patronage. This worship done to get blessings from the gods for the betterment of the kingdom and the people. Um means



sacrifice and Phra means God. The Ahom kings celebrated Umpha sixteen times. The first Umpha ceremony was performed by Chao-Lung-Siu-Ka-Pha in the year 1253 AD, When he established his permanent capital at Choraideo. It is believed that on the occasion he sacrificed two horses under a tree in order to appease, the God of wilderness (Ahom buranjee).

In Umpha worships three sets of Gods are worshipped. The Gods of Ahom pantheon are worshipped in the Bor-Deo-Sal, the Hindu Gods and Goddesses are worshipped in Hindu-Deo-Sal (also known as the Kechal-Khalty-Sal because of human sacrifices) and the Gods of wilderness are worshipped in Habi-Deosal. The Ahom Gods and goddesses worshipped in these celebrations are Khaokham, Ai-lengdin, Pha-nu-ru-lengdon, Chit-lam-cham, Ja-sing-pha, Mut-kum-tai-kum, Dam-ch0-phi and Ra-khin. The Hindu Gods and Goddesses are Saraswati, Mahadeo, Gossani, Bor-Bauli, Saru-Bauli, Khetar, Sel-konwar etc. The Gods of wilderness are Langkuri<sup>8</sup>, Nang-chi-chao, Po-phi-su, Phi-Gatial, Bhut, Jakh, Bagh Baghini etc. The Umpha festival is a day long program. Before celebration different altars are set up in proper places for different Gods and Goddesses. A lamp stand made of banana stem is set up for illuminating twenty five oil lamps at the centre of each pavilion. Another wooden post Phuk-Chag is erected beside the central altar where the sacrificial animal like buffalo, cow, hog, fowl, duck and pigeon are tied. Each altar is linked with the tying post with ropes. Offerings

are mainly duck eggs, ripe bananas, rice cakes, cooked rice, fruits, beetel nut, chingkara flowers, ornaments made of banana stems, a shirt and dhuti for Bordeuri. One white calf or a pig, one red coloured calf, one white goat, ducks, pigeons basil leaves, pepper grains, tongloti, one white buffalo, a pair of chicken etc are also offered.

All the Gods and Goddesses are invited to take their seats in the assigned places by chanting incantations in their names which is called Ao-tang. Then the priest enumerates the offerings birds and animals and other food products and invites the deities to accept these offerings which is called king-tang. Then the priest seeks blessings from the deities for the people of the country which is called Jon-ming. Then the Deori predicts the future and gives out ways of dispelling bad tiding by propitiation of Gods and Goddesses. The deories dance in these three deosals, Ahom hymns in bordeosal and assamese hymns in the other two deosals is sung by the bordeori and other deories after accepting the sacrifice of animals and drinking their bloods. After this the priest bid them farewell by sprinkling holy water on the deories who then gets back their senses. Farewell to Gods and Goddesses is called Bol-Tang.

#### **4.5 Chak Long**

The Ahom marriage ritual Chak-long has its mythical origin, Nanghunpha the Ahom manuscript says that Pha-nu-lengdon the Lord of Heaven sent a mission of Gods to the abode of Ak-Kai Mo'hung in the heavenly kingdom of Mungti, asking the hand of his eldest daughter Nang-hun-Pha in marriage in the Tai year Kachyeu. This marriage was performed in the

<sup>8</sup>The ancient God of the huge mountain, God of gold and silver.

Chaklong ritualistic way and since that time it is believed that the Ahoms “the descendents of heavenly Gods and persons” follow this system of Chaklong as their marriage ritual. This system of marriage is performed among the whole community in this day in spite of their adopting the Hindu ways of life. The literal meaning of Chaklong is believed to be the big wheel of life; Chak meaning wheel and Long meaning Big. The most important event in the wheel of life is marriage and hence it is Chaklong.

The detail procedure of this ceremonial ritual is divided into different order: Juron, Noani, Ceremonial feast, Rik Khown, Deoban, Ap-tang, Ganthian grinding, Doiyan, marriage procession, Huaguritola etc. The ceremony takes place at the house of the bride. The altar of the Chaklong is made of earth and sand. This altar is decorated with seven colours in the shape of a Lotus or in the pattern of circles. On the geometrically drawn lotus hundred and one earthen lamps are placed. The altar or the Morol is of three to four inches height and sixty one inches in diameter. The Lotus has sixteen petals. At the center there are two concentric circles, one smaller within a larger one. The space between the two circles is divided into four equal squares. One large earthen lamp is placed at the center. Below this lamp on the stand at the center another four earthen lamps are placed accordingly. Then at the sixteen peta-ends of the lotus sixteen lamps are placed. The remaining lamps are placed at eighty crossing points. The earthen lamps are lighted by the priest before the Chaklong ceremony. The bride and the bridegroom take their seats in front of the altar and the bride is seated on the left of

the bridegroom. In this ceremony one main priest conducts the ritual and two other priests assist him. The ladies escort the bride and the maternal uncle carries her to the altar. Then the bride and the groom are told about their lineages by the knowledgeable persons of the clans. The priest chant mantras in Ahom language and the bride and the groom showers rice and flowers on the Morol of the Chaklong platform amidst the holy sound of the ladies. The father of the bride prays with folded hands raised towards heaven prays that “O God overhead I am offering my daughter/sister to the groom”. Then he takes the right hand of the groom and the right hand of the bride and joins them in marriage. Then the bride and the bridegroom garden each other, each of which consists of hundred and one flowers. Then the bride offers a Hengdan to the bridegroom asking him to protect the country, family and the riches. Accepting the sword the groom promises to protect his country, his race and his religion. The bride also offers a Comar-bund which is supposed to be hand woven by the bride and hopes that he will be victorious wearing this sacred cloth as his shield. The priest now gives suitable advice about the importance of leading an ideal conjugal life having trust in one another. Exchange of gold rings, playing of Dies and Cowries are a part of this beginning of a new life for the married couple.

#### **4.6 Phuralung**

Amongst the religious rituals of the Ahoms the ritual of phuralung excludes the blood sacrifices. According to G C Barua’s Ahom-Assamese English Dictionary Phura is the name of a spirit. It is believed that Phura of the Ahoms is equal to the concept

of the Param Brahma in Hindu philosophy. Thus this worship is an appreciation of the qualities of the Brahma (God). This ritual reflects the spirituality of the Ahoms. In Phuralung an altar is made with earth or sand which has eight corners. At each corner a banana plant is planted. The devotees and the priests take their seats on the Western side. On the Eastern side a platform is made for keeping the food offerings in containers. The procedure of this ritual is very similar to a Sabah in the Assamese society. In a Sabah the holi books Gunamala or Srimad-bhagawat is kept on the Thapana (holi platform) similarly in Phuralung the Holy Scripture Pak PeynKa is placed on a platform. In a Sabah the Param-Baram is worshipped through Naam-Kirtan Similarly in Phuralung Phura-tara-along (the param brahma) is worshipped through prayers. Three priests are selected by the gathering to perform the puja. The gathering also selects persons for cooking the feast. The priests who set up the scripture a mixture of ghee, honey, milk, curd, molasses and sugar which is called Ya-Pulak. This is called the holy mixture and the altar and the offerings are sprinkled with it and the Bhakats are given some of it to drink.

For a full-fledged Phuralung celebration, hundred and one earthen lamps are arranged on a banana tree stem six to seven feet tall. This arrangement is called Lak. in front of the Lak offerings re placed covered with banana leaves. Three Sarais for the Bhakat, for Nam, and for the Holy Scripture are placed with beetle nuts and leaves and money. Saluting the devotees the head of the family explains the purpose of the ceremony and the priests and the devotees bless them. The Priests now

conduct collective prayer. Then the three priests read the scripture. Sometimes Gayan Bayan is also arranged by the family. After the completion of the puja refreshments are offered to everybody. At the end the priests distribute the food of the offerings among everybody. The most important point is that the food offerings for this ceremony are purely vegetarian to the exclusion of meat, fish, and egg and rice beer. This ritual gives utmost importance to the persons invited for the purpose as devotees.

#### **4.7 Night Worship (Rati-Sewa)**

Among the Ahoms the right worshippers are called Bor-Khelia. Ramdev or Romai was a preacher of Kal Sanghati sect of vaishnavism. He was the grandson of Saru Krishna dev, the founder of Chaliha Bareghar Satra. He wanted to spread vaishnavism among the tribal and semi tribal people of Assam. He found that it would be difficult to make his religion popular among the Ahoms, Chutias, Kacharis and Missings who take liquor, pock, and chicken that are taboos in Hindu religion. Therefore he included these items as the articles of offerings to God. Devotion to the Guru is the trade mark of this brand of Vaisnavism. Initiation given by a Guru is the first step towards becoming a resolute devotee. The Sadhu Bura is the highest dignitary in the congregation of Ravi Khuwa devotees. Panchanamiya then Chaltanya and Kewali are the different stages of the development of the devotee. Kewall is the ultimate aim of the devotees in this community. They become attached only to God giving up all earthly attachments. In this sect, the concept of devotion is important. The importance of Bhakti is utmost for the

emancipation of soul and life, hence show devotion to the Bhakats. This ritual is held at night in the prayer house where Sadhu and Kewali Bhakats, take their seats. A lamp is lit in front of the Sadhu. The devotees are offered food as Prasad. This seat has two divisions Kecha and Poka (Bhitar Pokia). This ritual is divided into three parts Sakitalague, Dangaria Sabha and Bor hew and only the Kewali bhakats can take part in this ritual. The main aim of this ritual is to be one with the supreme spirit.

### 5. Conclusion

In all leaving cultures change is inevitable. The first and foremost factor for change in the Ahom community was the inter-cast marriage with the local population. Chaolung Siukapha was the protagonist who not only marred the daughters of the Moran and the Barahi kings and also encouraged the unmarried nobles and soldiers to marry the local girls. In the process, Ahom community took in many aspects of the cultures of the local population.

The other important factor for change is religion. The Ahom kings patronize Hindu religion and built many temples and shrines and donated lands to expand the Vaishnavite religion. The Hindu Ahoms started neglecting the traditional Ahom religion and the priestly classes of Ahoms. The neo Vaishnavite Ahoms observed the restriction on taking pork, chicken and some gave up brewing the rice beer which is the traditional drink of the Tai Ahoms. Even the priestly classes Deodhai, Mohan Bailung also got influenced by the Hindu religion and got themselves initiated in to the Satra Auni-ati. Some of the Ahoms became flowers of Mayamora Gossain and

later, they were called Mattacks. But the most important development amongst the common Ahom people was their initiation to the Night worshipper's cult of Kalsanghati, which was propagated by Ramdev, Shyamdev, Sukdev, Sunanda etc. They attracted the Ahoms to their fold besides spreading their brand of Vaishnavism by introducing pork, Chicken and homemade liquor in the rituals. Here Lord Shiva and Guru Shankar became the saint. Ultimate object of the ritual was the disciple to give up the attachment to the earthly existence and the things one loves most. There is a sadhu symbolizing God and all the disciples offer allegiance to him. This night worshipping cult has a large following among the Ahoms.

The result of vaishnavism was the division which affected the Ahoms. But the Ahoms are gradually coming back to their traditional religion where the inter dining have returned including taking pork, chicken and liquor.

The Tai's who came to Assam under the leadership of Chao lung siukapha the twelve century were to some extent influenced by Mahayana Buddhism as evidenced by absence of sacrifices in the worship of God Almighty phura in phuralung worship. *But* it is fact that the royalty and the nobles did not *practice phuralung*. They followed the Ban-phi system of religion observing rituals like Me-Dum-Me-*Phi*, Umpha, saifaetc where the animals and birds were sacrificed to appease their Gods and Goddesses. *The blood* sacrifices indicated the shine of a *vibrant* and material race. In the religious scriptures Charaideo Biddhi Borbiddhe and charaideo biddhi innumerable Gods-

Goddesses are listed with the animals and birds which are to be sacrificed for their *appeasement*. Vaishnavism prohibited blood sacrifices and so most of the Ahom gave up their traditional Ban-Phi system of *religion*. It is observed that irrespective of the adherence to Hinduism or vaishnavism the Ahom community nowadays takes part in the Me-Dam-Phi, umpha festivals with *enthusiasm*, which are traditional *rituals*. *Religion and ritual* continues to play an important part of the life of the Ahoms. Due to the efforts for the revival of the traditional religion by the Tai sahitya *Sabha*, Deodhi-mohan bailing sanmilan etc. the Ahoms are veering towards the *traditional religion*. *Priesthood* has become *non restrictive* in the *observance* of Chack long and Me-Dam –me-phi etc.

The ancestor worship or Me-Dam-Me-phi was royally and publicly celebrated by Siu-Ka-Pha and his successors. Later on the Ahoms used to make offerings to the Dam of the kings and queens and the Royalty in the month of Chaitra in Choraideo on the Moidams. The first public Me-Dam-Me-Phi in 20th century was observed in 1965 in Guwahati on 31st January and from then on it is being celebrated publicly throughout the state. This ritual has gained the importance of a festival now. Sometimes it is observed in a Phuralung way, without any offerings of eggs or chicken. The Ahoms other than the priestly classes observe the ancestor worship by offering a pitcher full of fresh

rice liquor on the occasion of Magh Bihu and Bohag bihu. This is called “Salita Logua”. These are some of the changes brought about due to this social change.

The royal symbol of Dragon imprinted on the inscription and on the metallic plates and coins of the Ahom kings has now become a symbol of ethnic identity of the Ahoms.

Some of the religious ceremonies of the Tai Ahoms have definite influences if Hinduism. The Hindu pavilion set up in the Umpha worship and the ladies chanting the hymns of mother Goddess are inspired by Hindus and can be seen as the unifying efforts of the Ahoms to integrate the communities of locals. Due to the efforts for revival of the tradition by the organization such as Sadou Assam Ahom Sanmilan 1893, Sadau Assam Burangi Sanskriti Sangha 1955, Mahan-Deodhai-Bailung Sanmilan 1962, Patsaku Kendriya Tai Vidyalaya 1964, Sadau Asam Phralung Sangha 1972, Tai Language Course at Dibrugarh University etc. more and more common Ahoms are being attracted towards their traditional religious practices, mainly the inability to read and written the Tai Language distances today’s Ahom community people from their origin religious and traditional practices.

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## Development of Women's Studies in India and Assam: A Historical Outline

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### Abstract

The writings of Indian history for a long time dominated the deeds of man. The early historical writings were only about success and failure stories of every countable personality and were strictly limited to the political aspects. It is seen as ignorance towards other aspects like society and the economy. But changes occurred in the history writing from the mid of 20<sup>th</sup> century with D.D Kosambi's book *An Introduction to the Study of Indian History (1956)*. By writing this book he changes the paradigm of historical writing from political to social and also makes history an interdisciplinary subject. By following his ideology several other historians also emerged and turn history writing to another extent. Since the 1980s women's history became rich as some prominent writers started writing history from a feminist perspective. Some of the historians who belonged to this category are Uma Chakraborty, Tanika Sarkar, Urbashi Butalia, and Kumkum Roy. A new understanding of patriarchy and the position of women came to be explored by these historians. They also started to criticize the Alteckarian perspective about the position of women in Indian society. In the context of Assam, only a handful amount of writings is found. In the recent past, the changes and transformation of Assamese society in the colonial period and the changing position of women had been explored.

Keywords: Women's study, Female education, Social Reforms.

### 1. Introduction

A long silence always maintains on depicting women as they are devalued for a long time. During the nationalist discourse on women also they were not allowed to speak rather women were the central point of their discussion. When they speak, they are not being heard and also not given a platform to share their thoughts. Though it existed it is not taken into account and also not talked about. In the article, *The Nationalist Resolution of*

*the Women's Question*, Partha Chatterjee discusses that the nationalist resolution separated the sphere of the realm into two—the material and spiritual. In nationalist understanding, women are placed in the spiritual category which should be untouched by the western culture as it represented the utmost culture and tradition of India and this is superior to the materialistic nature of the western world. In the 19<sup>th</sup>-century reform movement, not a single female reformer was seen, and

also can't be assumed to have a conversation between the sufferer and reformers. Again, *Sreebodh* was the first women magazine published in India and *Balabodi* was the first women magazine in the Hindi language edited by the male reformer named Bharatendu Harichandra and *Mullah-e-Nissan* was a pioneering journal in Urdu for women. The earliest Bengali magazines are- *Bamabodhini*, and *Bharathi* edited by Swaranakumari Devi created a space for women writers from Bengal. In south Periyar's Self Respect Movement journal *Kudi Arasu*, *Puratchi*, *Patgutharivu*, *Samadharmam* gave space to women to write their articles related to women issues. *Sarada* and *Mahila* were two prominent women magazines from Kerela. There were three prominent women magazines in the initial time of its emergence. 1. *Grihalakshmi*-edited by Gopala Devi reforming women and domesticity. 2. *Streedharpan*- edited by Ramaswami Nehru propagated education, political awakening and fought against gender discrimination. 3. *Cannada*-encouraged full participation of women in the public sphere. *Arya Mahila*- edited by Sanatan Dharma Mahamandal looked at the status of women based on Vedic knowledge. *Maduri* and *Saraswati* were journals that published articles about the lifestyle of women in other countries. *Andhra Lakshmi*, *Hindu Yuvathi*, *Bharatha Mahila*, *Grihalakshmi*, *Viswagnami Y Asoda*, was some journals that urged women participation in the freedom struggle movement. But the early writers, reformers and historians of that

time not considered these sources as important while understanding the grievances of women. So, here an attempt has been made to reveal the development of women's studies in India as well as in Assam. Also, to find out the things that left behind.

## 2. Objectives

- i. To study the condition of women's study in India and Assam.
- ii. To find out the changing outlines in Women's Studies.
- iii. To assess the things which remain untouched by the historians who are involved in the study of women.

## 3. Methodologies and Sources

The methodology followed in the study is descriptive, historical and analytical. Both primary and secondary sources are taken into account for the preparation of the topic. The primary sources are relevant newspapers, periodicals, journals, and autobiographies. Secondary sources include published books, journals, periodicals, unpublished thesis, and dissertations of the different universities that have been used. Relevant websites and browsers were also consulted in the preparation of this topic.

## 4. Discussion

From the nationalist outline to the present, several changes has manifested in Women's studies. As an example, Altekar's *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization: From Prehistoric Times to the Present Day (1938)* study on the position of women in Hindu civilization primarily based on 'Brahmanical' sources and outlines the position of women from the earliest times to right up to the mid-

fifties of this century; when the Hindu Code Bill was under consideration. The work unravels the entire body of opinion of the lawmakers on such areas as the education of women, marriage, divorce, and the position of women in public life, property rights of women, and the general position in society. Further, he is just concerned with women in the context of the family and one almost gets the feeling that the status of women needs to be raised to ensure the healthy development of India. But he left to discuss some phenomenal attempts of women as there have present so many courageous women in his time who were quite advanced in the different fields. Women of that time created organizations intending to empower women morally as well as materially. Such organizations include the 'Mahila Samaj' (Lady's society) which was formed in 1882 by Swarnakumari Devi, Sharada Sadan in Bombay as well as Arya Mahila Samaj in Pune also 1882 by Ramabai Saraswati, and in 1910 we have Saraladevi Choudharini's Bharat Stree Mahamandal. All the women organizations were founded to have a women's exclusive platform because till then all women's meetings were also being held in conjunction with the meeting of the National Congress. So, to have a platform for own such types of organizations were founded. As far as the professional women were concerned Kadambini Basu and Haimavati Sen were two of India's first women doctors; Santosh Kumari Devi and Prabhati Devi in Calcutta became trade union leaders.

Muthulakshmi Reddy was the first woman legislator appointed to the Madras Legislative Council in, 1927. These women also came from the Hindu family but Altekar left this advancement of women aside while depicting the position of women in the Hindu society in his book, *The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization: from Prehistoric Times to the Present Day*.

Development of female education, women enfranchisement, women organizations and the nationalist movement that started at the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century led to liberate women, especially women from the elite or middle-class. But some of the fundamental stereotypes remained as same as not a single man from the liberal section and elite women had undertaken the stand to remove the basic set-up of the society. So, the role of women and the nature of women that were projected by the Shastras and Dharmashastras remained the same. Moreover, if we review the topics that had been discussed in the different phases of the public sphere then we realised that no one from whichever group they belonged had ever tried to break the fundamental setup of the society. All of them just want some modification on the role of women but most of them desired to reserve the duties like cooking, cleaning, stitching in which needs the minimum effort for women and otherwise the works that needed the highest efforts mostly assigned to the men. In the case of the distribution of the behaviour of human nature, the kindness, calmness, forgiveness, tolerance,

consideration, selflessness, noble and understanding are reserved for women and nature like boldness, courage, bravery, heroism, audacity, vigour, mettle, daring, dominant, prevailing, leading, and might are saved for men. In this case, in the book, “*Women and Society in India*” Neera Desai and Maitreyi Krishmaraj said,

“Though the social reform movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and nationalist movement of the 20<sup>th</sup> century helped the elite group of women to enjoy freedom for society as a whole, sex roles, stereotype images and the Indian woman’s conception of herself or her role in life remained virtually unchanged.”

This outlook changed with the coming of feminist historians. The feminist historians who worked in the modern period mainly focus on various letters and autobiographies of women that were written privately while understanding what women felt for them and what role played in the home. In the book, *The Hindu wife and Hindu Nation: Domesticity and Nationalism in Ninetieth Century Bengal (1992)*, Tanika Sarkar discusses the status of a Hindu wife in the family, the life of a widow, and Hindu personal law that led to shaping the ideal Hindu wife. She also traces the autobiography of Rassasundari Devi, *Amar Jiban* while examining the duty of women in a Hindu household. She argued,

“The woman was, moreover, required to provide heavy unpaid and often unacknowledged labour at home.”

In the book, *Women in Modern India (1996)*, Geraldine Forbes traced the

history of Indian women from the 19<sup>th</sup>-century reform movement to the impact of modern education upon them. She tries to give a detailed account of the progress of Indian women. She also examines the works of the female organizations and women’s engagement in the Gandhian freedom struggle movement. In her opinion freedom struggle movement provided greater opportunities for Indian women to take a public stand. She also reviewed the works of women’s journal and magazines as these are the basic sources to depict women’s perspective and thinking.

The former middle-class reformers Rammohan Roy, Vidyasagar, Dayanand Saraswati, and Vivekanda only tried to establish the ideas of religious scriptures and did not put courage on the things which are not available in scriptures. The Dalit reformers even dared to burn religious scriptures. Mahad Satyagraha, which took place on 20 March 1927 under the leadership of Ambedkar and Jyotiba Phule, also rejected the caste system which projected inequality and injustice against the lower sections of the society. He also rejected the Sanskritization (coin by M.N. Srinivas in his book “*Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India*”) process taken by some sections of lower caste, who tried to upgrade their position in the caste hierarchy by adopting the rituals of upper caste. According to Phule Sanskritization process created more differences between the higher caste and lower caste and it would project the acceptance of cruelty of the caste system.

To get rid of the exploitation, Phule appealed to all lower sections to unite in a 'larger group' or 'Bahujansamaj', to stand against the Brahman monopoly. Lower caste reformers not only raised their voice against the caste system but also, they speak for the emancipation of women. They also opened several girls' schools. The drawbacks of earlier feminists are that they ignored these reforms and never placed them in their writings. Till the end of the twentieth century also no attempt has been made to explore the problems of Dalit and lower-class women and they also not interested to examine the attempt of the Dalit reformers on such matter.

From the 21<sup>st</sup> century onwards some changes has seen in the attempt of feminist writers as they considered women's writing, while representing women. In her book, *Gendering Caste: Through a Feminist Lens (2003)*, Uma Chakraborty argues, "Ritualising female sexuality through endogamy and archaic obsession with cultural purity is devised to maintain the caste hierarchy. Upper-caste women are considered as the objects of 'moral panic' and as the carriers of status, rituals, and class their mobility is therefore restricted." A lower caste man's sexuality is a threat to an upper caste pure blood; therefore, hypogamy is much more detested than hypergamy in the Brahmanical text. In her other book, *Conceptualising Brahmanical Patriarchy in Early India*, she described the sexuality of upper-caste women reserved only for upper-caste men. For that reason, women

were restricted to go out and strictly under the supervision of males in their families.

The book, *Feminism in India (2004)* edited by Maitrayee Choudhuri, compiled many articles written by various authors. The editor gave importance to tracing the feminist movement that took place in the modern period. Apart from these three articles three women are included in this volume. In this essay, the above mention three are analyzed as Cornelia Sorabji, Rukeya Sekhawat Hussain, and Tarabai Shinde and named as early feminists because their voices were ahead of the time. They had questioned some of the prejudices observed by society against women. They were the earliest, who represented self and discusses the individual identity of a woman that is distinct from the men's projection about women. Autobiographies and self-writings of women are the basic sources for understanding what women feel for themselves, and what responses they gave to society's presentation of them. It is because as victims of gender, patriarchy, caste, and tradition women always have a different story to tell. As example, Tarabai Shinde in her book *A Comparison between Women and Men* showed the custom and traditions of society which are used as a tool to control women and as well control her free movement. She claimed if there had no restriction for men to remarry after the death of their wives then why the same role does not exist for women. If the same god builds both (men and women) as necessary for one another then why do women only suffer the pain of

widowhood? Why does society blame only women for everything rather than blaming their crucial practices of child marriage and polyandry? In support of some liberty for women, she claimed that Women are *Lakshmi* by themselves and they have the strength to maintain peace in their family. So, she prayed for women as “May shine like lightning stars and utilise their conduct as *prativratas* in their husband's families and their own”. Cornelia Sorabji in her autobiography, *Stray Thoughts of an Indian Girl (1891)* speaks about women's education and raised voices against child marriage. She is in favour of a woman's own decision for her marriage rather than following the family decision. She also had given importance to the aspect of the ‘individuality of women’. The Hindu custom prepares women as *prativarta* and dutiful to her laws family and never valued the self-identity of women. It's assumed that the religious duties of women will open the door of heaven to their families. So Sorabji argued that she never wants to go for resistance but just respect the growing self-identity of a woman and wanted to open the door of heaven for herself along with her family. Rassundari Devi, the first Indian woman Autobiographer wrote in her autobiography *Amar Jiban (1876)* about her hardship to fulfil her desire of reading. She knew that reading was taken as a sinful act for girls but Rassundari Devi made everything possible to fulfil her desire of reading. It was believed at that time that the woman who reads would be a

widow in the future. Her autobiography is an important testimony of the plight of women in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain in her book *Sultanas Dream (1905)* dreamt about a utopian world for women where they freely move anywhere without any fear. Where women ruled and managed everything and men were subordinate to women and remained in fear. She humorously noted down every injustice, inequality, and suffering faced by women.

In the case of Assam, there is only a handful amount of writings just available on women. In her book *Journey of Assamese Women (1836-1937)*, Aparna Mahanta traces the journey of Assamese women from the 19<sup>th</sup> century and their entry into the new world. She evaluated the progress of women's education too examined society's responses to it. Unduly, she presents a summative account of the struggles and responses of the new women through their writings. She appraises the works of women's organizations, especially Assam Mahila Samiti. By discussing those she avoided the major subjects like conjugality, widowhood, and marriage. So, the journey which she tries to illustrate in the book is not demonstrated properly. Like these magazines and journals *Ghar-Jeuti's* first Assamese woman journal was compiled and published later by Aparna Mahanta. *Ghar-Jeuti* was the first ground that gave women to improve their writing abilities. It also provided women with a space to share their thoughts on the different aspects of society. *Ghar-Jeuti* became an



important forum that set several questions regarding the position and existence of women in society. As the earliest vehicle for running women's idiom, it provided larger information about the desire of women that inundated women's thoughts. *Status of Women in Assam (With Special Reference to Non-Tribal Societies)*, a proceeding volume that included 17 research papers. This book edited by the S.L Baruah and published in 1992, deals with the status of women in the non-tribal Assamese society. Here she examines the eminence of non-tribal Assamese women in politics, education, society, culture, economy and family, law, and administration.

In his book, *Chandraprabha Saikiani*, (2001) Achyut Kumar Sharma traced the life of Chandraprbha Saikiani. He provided a very brief note on the life and experience of the Chandraprabha Saikiani and avoided critical observation of contemporary society.

*Development in Women's education: a Study of Assam*, Bina Lahkar glimpses the development of women's education from the missionaries to the later advancement. She just deals with the documented account while understanding the advancement of women's education in Assam.

In her book, *Assamese Women in the Freedom Struggle Movement (1993)*, Dipti Sharma examined the engagement of Assamese women in the freedom struggle movement. She deals with the political aspects and avoided the socio-cultural impact of the movement.

In his PhD thesis entitled, *Rebuilding the Nation: The Discourses of the Women's Question in Colonial Assam C. 1884- C.1926 (2009)* submitted to Dibrugarh University. Here Bipul Chaudhury discusses the questions that arise in the colonial time which helps in the re-enactment of the Assamese nation. By discussing it he dealt with the aspects like social reforms, education, conjugality and domesticity, and political participation of the women. He also tries to examine 'colonial modernity' which allowed women some space in the public sphere. Greater concern also showed on the 'Assamese Nationalism' as it led to the growth of consciousness among Assamese people for their existence again stipulated the respect for own beliefs. His PhD thesis entitled, *Society and Patriarchy in 20<sup>th</sup> century Assam: Chandraprabha Saikiani and her Experience (1901-1972)* was submitted to Dibrugarh University in 2018. Here, Ajit Konwar discusses Chandraprabha Saikiani's efforts to break the obstacles like seclusion and patriarchal norms to make an active presence in society. He also estimates other aspects like the contemporary society of the Chandraprbha Saikia, prejudices that are observed for females' external existence, and restrictions made on women's education. He also provided an overview of the women's movement that took place in the cited era. *Self-Narration and Identity Formation a Critical Study of Selected Women's Autobiographical writings in Assam* is a PhD thesis of Lakhpriya Gogoi that was submitted to

Gauhati University. Here she examines some specific women's self-narratives accounts. With the help of those accounts, she evaluates the experiences of these women in the different aspects of their life. She also located the condition of women in society and the role of gender in framing women's position in society.

The whole studies only depicted about the women who came from the affluent families. Earlier they had to maintain rigid seclusion as patriarchal norms preserved the ideology of controlling the female sexuality. But a larger part of people belongs from the tribal community in where women almost have a good position. In his book 'History of Assam' Edward Gait said that in comparison to other states of India women Assam gets quite a better place in the society. As an example, in the Garo, Khasi, and Jaintia (that time Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh under Assam) women could choose their husbands and children took the clan's name of their mother instead of father name. Among the Lalungs, inheritance is matrilineal. The youngest daughter inherits the property of her mother and she does not leave her original home instead of that her husband comes to live with her. The women of the Naga, Dimas, and Karbi communities also enjoy better liberty as these tribes have communal

ownership. The women of the Ao community get an almost equal position in the household as for their engagement in Jhum. The husband cannot behave badly; otherwise, he becomes answerable to his community. Though a daughter of this community did not enjoy the property ownership a little share of the property is given to a widow for maintenance of herself and the minor children. A widow is also treated well by her other members of the family. But these got minimum appreciation while studying women of Assam.

## 5. Conclusion

Women's studies even today also limited to highlighting inhuman practices against them and the rescuing activities and reforms by the men to give them a better place in society. Only just a few writings are available that 'wholeheartedly' speak about their development by seeking their equal position. This scenario is almost the same in all the societies of the world and India is also not different in such. So, it is the main factor in creating the gap in women studies in India as well as in Assam.

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## ‘কৃষ্ণবিষুৎবাসুদেৱ’ : মানস ইন্ধনৰ দেৱতায়ন বনাম বিবেক বীক্ষণৰ মানৱায়ন

ভাগ্যশ্ৰী তামুলী

অসমীয়া বিভাগ, ডিব্ৰুগড় বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

### সংক্ষিপ্তসৰ

অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ উপাখ্যানভিত্তিক উপন্যাসসমূহৰ ভিতৰত ড० খৰ্গেশ্বৰ ভূঞাৰ ‘কৃষ্ণবিষুৎবাসুদেৱ’ এখন বহুপঠিত আৰু বহু চৰ্চিত উপন্যাস। প্ৰাচীন আৰু আধুনিক ভাৰতবৰ্ষৰ সবাতেকৈ চৰ্চিত চৰিত্ৰ ‘কৃষ্ণ’ক ঐতিহাসিক পুৰুষ হিচাপে গণ্য কৰি আৰু মানৱায়নত প্ৰদান কৰি তীক্ষ্ণবুদ্ধি, প্ৰত্যুৎপন্নমতি, বলশক্তি, কূটকৌশল, ৰাজনৈতিক চাতুৰি, শত্ৰুৰ মনঃস্তত্ব অধ্যয়ন আদি গুণকৰ্মক ৰূপত এই উপন্যাসত উপস্থাপন কৰোৱা হৈছে। মানুহক দেৱতাৰ ৰূপত উপস্থাপন কৰাক - দেৱতায়ন আৰু দেৱতাক মানুহৰ ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ কৰাক- মানৱায়ন বোলা হয়। কল্পনাত এই সীমাবদ্ধ নাথাকি মহাকাব্যিক চৰিত্ৰৰ ঐতিহাসিক ভেঁটি স্থাপনৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাত কৃষ্ণ চৰিত্ৰৰ মানৱায়ন এই উপন্যাসৰ ভেঁটি। এই উপন্যাসৰ কাহিনীভাগৰ মূল হৰিবংশ। বিষুৎপুৰাণ আৰু ভাগৱতৰ দুটা এটা অংশ সোমাইছে। বীৰেন্দ্ৰ মিত্ৰৰ ‘যদু বংশ-ব্ৰজপৰ্ব’ আৰু নৃসিংহ প্ৰসাদ ভাদুড়ীৰ ‘মহাভাৰতৰ ভাৰত যুদ্ধ এবং কৃষ্ণ’ নামৰ গ্ৰন্থৰো সহায় লোৱা হৈছে। কৃষ্ণৰ জীৱনৰ অন্ধকাৰ দিশবোৰ উন্মোচন কৰি ‘লীলা’ নামৰ অলৌকিকতাৰ চাপ মোকলাই ঐতিহাসিক পুৰুষৰ ৰূপত কৃষ্ণক মানৱায়ন কৰা উপন্যাসখনিৰ অৱলোকনেই এই আলোচনা পত্ৰৰ উপজীৱ।

**সূচক শব্দ :** দেৱতায়ন, মানৱায়ন, দেৱঅনুগামী, বিষুৎদাস, দেৱষড়যন্ত্ৰ, সংকৰ্ষণ।

### ১. পৰিচয়

সনাতন হিন্দু ধৰ্মত কৃষ্ণ হৈছে ভগৱান। ভগৱানৰ প্ৰধান দহোটা অৱতাৰৰ ভিতৰত বহুতেই কৃষ্ণক স্থান নিদি পূৰ্ণব্ৰহ্ম অৱতাৰ ৰূপে পূজে। অৱশ্যে তাৰ মাজতো হলিৰাম অৱতাৰৰ ঠাইত কৃষ্ণক দহোটা প্ৰধান অৱতাৰৰ এটা বুলিও গণ্য কৰা পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। নামঘোষাৰ ‘নাম অল্পয়’ত কৃষ্ণ শব্দৰ ব্যাখ্যাত কৃষ্ণ শব্দৰ অৰ্থ - পৃথিৱীবাচক আৰু ৰ-ৰ অৰ্থ আনন্দ হিচাপে উল্লেখ আছে। আকৌ কৃষ্ণ ধাতুৰ অৰ্থ- আকৰ্ষণ কৰা; কৃষ্ণৰ গাত সকলোকে আকৰ্ষণ কৰিব পৰা গুণ বিদ্যমান। কৃষ্ণৰ চৰিত্ৰকো নানাঞ্জে নানাধৰণে ব্যাখ্যা কৰিছে- পুৰাণ পুৰুষোত্তম, কপটৰ চূড়ামণি, ভাৰতীয় ৰাজনীতিৰ প্ৰথম সূত্ৰধাৰ ইত্যাদি। কোনোবাই যদি কৃষ্ণ চৰিত্ৰত দেখা পায় লাম্পট্য, ভক্ত সকলে তাৰ মাজতো দেখা পায় - ‘কামজয় নামে ইটো কেশৱৰ কেলি’।

কৃষ্ণৰ কাহিনীক হৰিবংশ, বিষুৎপুৰাণ আৰু ভাগৱতে পূৰ্ণতা দিছে। তাৰ পিছতে অন্যান্য পুৰাণতকৈ তুলনামূলক ভাৱে এই ক্ষেত্ৰত স্থান দিব পাৰি ব্ৰহ্মপুৰাণক। হৰিবংশ, বিষুৎপুৰাণ আৰু ভাগৱতৰ কৃষ্ণ কাহিনীৰ সামগ্ৰিক তুলনাত দেখা যায়, হৰিবংশত কৃষ্ণ দেৱতা বিষুৎৰ ঔৰসজাত মানৱীৰ গৰ্ভৰ মানৱ, বিষুৎপুৰাণত বিষুৎৰ বহু গুণৰ লগত

কৃষ্ণৰ গুণ সানমিহলি কৰা হৈছে আৰু ভাগৱতত সম্পূৰ্ণৰূপে কৃষ্ণই বিষুৎ, বিষুৎৰেই বাসুদেৱ-কৃষ্ণবিষুৎবাসুদেৱ।

### ২. উদ্দেশ্য

জনমানসত ঋণাত্মক ধাৰণাৰ পৰিচয় পৰিগ্ৰহ কৰি অহা মহাকাব্যিক চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ অধ্যয়ন আৰু বিশ্লেষণ যথার্থতে এক অগতানুগতিক গৱেষণা। তদনুৰূপ, ধনাত্মক ধাৰণা সম্বলিত চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ ধনাত্মকতাৰ আঁৰৰ ঠায়ে ঠায়ে সুপ্ত কূটনীতিৰ জটিল আৱৰণ তথা অলৌকিকতাৰ চাপ গুচাই, সন্তালনী সময়ৰ আপেক্ষিক গতিৰ পৰা মোকলাই, যুক্তিনিষ্ঠভাৱে, সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ সৈতে একীভূত কৰি চোৱাৰ হাবিয়াস বহুমাত্ৰিক সম্পৰীক্ষণ। এই সম্পৰীক্ষণৰ অভিজ্ঞাপন ড० খৰ্গেশ্বৰ ভূঞাৰ ‘কৃষ্ণবিষুৎবাসুদেৱ’ শীৰ্ষক উপাখ্যানভিত্তিক উপন্যাসখনত কেনেদৰে হৈছে তাৰ বিশ্লেষণেই এই অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য।

### ৩. অধ্যয়নৰ পদ্ধতি

ড० খৰ্গেশ্বৰ ভূঞাৰ ‘কৃষ্ণবিষুৎবাসুদেৱ’ উপন্যাসখনত কৃষ্ণ চৰিত্ৰৰ মানৱায়ন সম্পৰ্কে অধ্যয়ন

কৰোতে বৰ্ণনাত্মক আৰু বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতি গ্ৰহণ কৰা হৈছে।

### ৩.১. 'কৃষ্ণবিষ্ণুৰূপসুন্দৰ' ত কৃষ্ণৰ মানৱায়ন :

যথেষ্ট বাস্তৱানুগ 'হৰিবংশ'ক গহীনা কৰি কৃষ্ণে কথা বিষয়ক এই উপন্যাসখন ৰচনা কৰিছে। অলৌকিকতা সম্পূৰ্ণ বাদ দি চৰিত্ৰ তথা ঘটনালীক মৌলিক নৈপুণ্যৰে বাস্তৱ ৰূপ দিছে আৰু সেই বাস্তৱ ৰূপ দিবলৈ যাওঁতে কৃষ্ণক দেৱতাৰ শাৰীত নাৰাখি মানুহৰ শাৰীত ৰাখি লৈছে। বাস্তৱ ৰূপৰ প্ৰকাশ সম্ভৱ হোৱা দিশসমূহ আলোচনাৰ সুবিধাৰ্থে ভাগ ভাগকৈ বিশ্লেষণ কৰা হৈছে-

ক) অতিলৌকিক ক্ৰিয়াত লৌকিকত্ব আৰোপঃ

শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণে বুলিলেই লীলাধৰ কৃষ্ণৰ ৰূপেই পোনচাটেই মনলৈ আহে। জন্মৰ পূৰ্বৰ পৰা মৃত্যুৰো পৰৱৰ্তী পৰ্যায়লৈকে প্ৰতিটো কৃষ্ণে কাহিনীত সংযুক্ত হৈছে অতিলৌকিক অলেখ ঘটনা-পৰিঘটনা। ফেণ্টাচীপ্ৰবণ মনে আকৰ্ষণৰ তাড়নাত এই হওক কিম্বা ধৰ্মীয় গণ্ডীৰ নিৰ্মিয়মান সূত্ৰৰ প্ৰৰোচনাত এই হওক সেই অলৌকিকতা আৰু শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণক এনেভাৱে সংযুক্ত কৰি ল'লে, যাৰ ফলত কৃষ্ণে অতিমানৱৰো অধিক হৈ দেৱোত্তৰীয় ৰূপ লৈ আদৰ্শাত্মক চৰিত্ৰৰ অৰ্থবোদ্ধা লাভৰ পৰা সুদূৰপৰাহত হৈ ৰ'ল। ফলত চৰিত্ৰৰ ইতিবাচক-নেতিবাচক দিশক সাম্প্ৰতিক জীৱন চৰ্চাত প্ৰায়োগিক হোৱাৰ বিপৰীতে কৃষ্ণে চৰিত্ৰ হৈ ৰ'ল অতিমুখ্য সত্তা। অলৌকিকত্ব যদি সুঘ্ৰাণ, লৌকিকত্ব তাৰ বাৎময় পুষ্প এই কথা স্বীকাৰ কৰিয়েই অতিলৌকিকতাৰ চাপ গুচাই সাধাৰণ তথা লৌকিক ৰূপ গ্ৰহণ কৰাৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত যত্নপৰ হোৱা উচিত। এইক্ষেত্ৰত লেখকে কেতবোৰ বিশেষ সাহিত্যৰূপৰ সৃষ্টি কৰি কৃষ্ণক লৌকিক ৰূপ দিয়াৰ প্ৰচেষ্টাত ব্ৰতী হৈছে-

#### ৩.১.১. চৰিত্ৰ সৃষ্টি

দেৱলোক আৰু মৰ্ত্যৰ সংযোগকাৰী হিচাপে পূৰ্ণাণে দেৱৰ্ষি নাৰদক ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ দৰে এই উপন্যাসত নাৰদৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে বিষ্ণুৰ আঞ্জাবাহী হিচাপে 'বিষ্ণুদাস' চৰিত্ৰৰ সৃষ্টি কৰি যোগাযোগকাৰীৰূপে দেখুৱাইছে, যি বিষ্ণুৰ একান্ত ভৃত্য, কোনো ঐশ্বৰীয় শক্তিধৰ চৰিত্ৰ নহয়।

কৃষ্ণই যতমানে অলৌকিক কাম কৰিছে সেইসমূহ কাম কৃষ্ণৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে বিষ্ণুদাসে সমজুৰাভাৱে লোকচক্ষুৰ আঁৰত ৰৈ সম্পাদন কৰিছে বা বিষ্ণুদাসে একাধিক কৰ্মচাৰীক নিয়োগ কৰি সম্পাদন কৰোৱাইছে। 'ৰাইজে নখ জোকাৰিলে নৈ বয়'- তাৰেই অপলাপ হৈ কেৱল কৃষ্ণই সকলো কৰা বুলি মানুহক প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰাৰ ফলতহে অলৌকিকতা আছিল। কিন্তু সেইয়া যে বিভাট মাথোঁ, সমজুৰা শক্তিয়েহে 'বিষ্ণুদাস'ৰ পৰিচালনাত যতমানে দুঃসাধ্যক সাধন কৰিছে, এনেকৈ

অলৌকিকতাৰ মেৰপাকত থকা প্ৰতিটো ঘটনাক বাস্তৱসন্মত ভাৱে দাঙি ধৰিছে 'বিষ্ণুদাস', 'দেৱসেনা' আদি চৰিত্ৰৰ সৃষ্টি কৰি।

বিষ্ণুদাসক কৃষ্ণৰ জীৱন নাটৰ সূত্ৰধাৰ হিচাপে উপস্থাপন কৰি লেখকে কৃষ্ণৰ সমগ্ৰ অতিলৌকিক জীৱনক লৌকিকতাৰ ডোলেৰে বান্ধি পেলাইছে।

#### ৩.১.২. পৰিৱেশ সৃষ্টি

'কামজয় নামে ইটো কেশৱৰ কেলি' বুলি যি মহাৰাসৰ অতিলৌকিক কেলি প্ৰচাৰিত হৈ আহিছে, সেই ঘটনাক তেনেই সাধাৰণ পৰিৱেশ হিচাপে এই উপন্যাসত উপস্থাপন কৰি লেখকে বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে 'হল্লীশ নৃত্য' নামৰ এটি পৰম্পৰাগত নৃত্যৰ উল্লেখৰে। হল্লীশ নৃত্যত এজন যুৱকক মাজত লৈ যুৱতীহঁতে চক্ৰাকাৰে ঘূৰি ঘূৰি নাচে। ওলোটাই এগৰাকী যুৱতীৰ চাৰিওফালে নাচে যুৱতীহঁতেও। সদ্য যৌৱনপ্ৰাপ্ত যুৱকহঁতে নিজৰ আৰাধ্যগৰাকীক অৰ্থাৎ ৰাধাগৰাকীক সেই নিশাই বিচাৰি উলিওৱাটো গোপ সমাজৰ নিয়ম। এই হল্লীশ নৃত্যৰ লগত ৰজিতা খুৱাই তেনেই লৌকিক ৰূপ প্ৰকট কৰিব পাৰিছে লেখকে 'মংগল বুঢ়া' চৰিত্ৰৰ উপস্থাপন কৰি। মংগল বুঢ়াই ৰাস উৎসৱত ভাগ লৈছিল, বুঢ়াৰ বাবে আৰাধিকা গোপী অৰ্থাৎ ৰাধা সৰুৰে পৰাই ঠিক হৈ আছিল, সেই ৰাধাৰ নাম আছিল চন্দ্ৰমুখী। এনেকৈ 'ৰাধা'ক আৰাধিকা শব্দৰ ব্যুৎপত্তি হিচাপে উল্লেখ কৰি ৰাধাজনিত সকলোবোৰ অলৌকিকতাৰ শাম কটাইছে।

পৰিৱেশ সৃষ্টিৰ অন্য এটা নিদৰ্শন দিব পাৰি মৃত্যুৰ আগে আগে কংসই দেখা সপোনৰ নিৰ্মিত। কৃষ্ণে মথুৰাত উপস্থিত হৈ এফালৰ পৰা কংসপ্ৰেৰিত অসুৰক সংহাৰ কৰাত কংসই সপোনত মুগ্ধহীন মৃতদেহ, ধুমকেতুৰ পয়োভৰ, ভূত-প্ৰেতৰ নৃত্য, বিহপূৰ্ণ পাত্ৰৰ পৰা বিহপান কৰা দেখা আদি ঘটনাক কংসৰ অস্তিৰ আৰু প্ৰাণৰ ভয়ত কাতৰ মনৰ স্বাভাৱিক ঘটনা হিচাপে প্ৰকট কৰাইছে।

#### ৩.১.৩. দেৱষড়যন্ত্ৰৰ স্বৰূপ প্ৰকাশ

সমগ্ৰ উপন্যাসখনত কৃষ্ণক মানৱায়ন কৰিবলৈ লেখক সক্ষম হোৱাৰ মূলতে হ'ল দেৱ ষড়যন্ত্ৰৰ সমস্ত ক্ৰিয়া কাণ্ডক স্পষ্টকৈ উদঙাই দেখুওৱাৰ সফলতা। লেখকে প্ৰতিটো অতিলৌকিক কাৰ্যৰ আঁৰত থকা দেৱতাৰ চক্ৰান্ত তুলি ধৰি পাঠকৰ মনত সহজ ৰূপকৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিব পাৰিছে।

সমগ্ৰ চক্ৰান্তৰ ৰচক হিচাপে দেখুৱা হৈছে বিষ্ণুক অথচ বিষ্ণু গোটেই উপন্যাসখনত কায়িকভাৱে উহ্য। মাত্ৰ দুবাৰ সশৰীৰে বিষ্ণু প্ৰকট হৈছে। বিষ্ণুদাসে বিষ্ণুৰ নিৰ্দেশানুসাৰে বিভিন্ন চল-চাতুৰিৰে বিষ্ণুক সাধন কৰোৱায়।



উপন্যাসখনৰ পহিলাতেই দেৱযড়যন্ত্ৰৰ বলি হৈছে দুজন যাদৱ- এজন কংসৰ খুৰাক 'দেৱক' আৰু আনজন কংসৰ ভগ্নীপতি 'বসুদেৱ'। বিষুৱৰ নিৰ্দেশত বিষুৱদাসে দুয়োজনকে 'সংঘমুখ্য'ৰ দৰে উচ্চ পদৰ লালসা দি অভিশ্পীত কাৰ্য তেওঁলোকৰ দ্বাৰাই পোনপ্ৰথমে সাধন কৰাইছে। কৰ্মৰ লগতে কথাবে ভুলায়ো বিভিন্ন যড়যন্ত্ৰ কৰা দেখা গৈছে। দৈৱকীৰ মৃত সাতটা সন্তান প্ৰকৃততে হিৰণ্যকশিপুৰ দুৰাচাৰী ভাতৃ কালনেমীৰহে ঔৰসজাত বুলি বসুদেৱক অৱগত কৰি বসুদেৱৰ পুত্ৰশোক নিৰ্বাপিত কৰি দুগুণ আগ্ৰহেৰে এক প্ৰকাৰৰ জেদীমনৰ সৃষ্টিৰে বসুদেৱক ইতিপূৰ্বে বিষুৱে ৰচি থোৱা কৰ্মত নিয়োজিত কৰাইছিল। কৃষ্ণজন্মৰ সময়ৰ আকাশবাণী এজন দৈৱজ্ঞৰ মুখেদি কোৱা হৈছে আৰু ঘটনাৰ বাস্তৱানুগ ৰূপ প্ৰতীয়মান কৰি সেই দৈৱজ্ঞজন পিছত হিমালয়লৈ গৈ অন্তৰ্ধান হোৱা বুলি উল্লেখ কৰিছে।

কৃষ্ণজন্মৰ কথাংশ সাৰমৰ্ম উপন্যাসত উল্লেখ আছে- প্ৰজ্বলিত ঔষধীৰজ্জ্বৰে নিদ্ৰাত অচেতন কৰিব পৰা সুগন্ধি বতাহত বিয়পাই প্ৰহৰীক অচেতন কৰি 'যুগনিদ্ৰা' নামৰ দেৱপ্ৰেৰিত ধাত্ৰীৰ হতুৱাই সুবিধাজনক সময়ত দৈৱকীক প্ৰসৱ কৰোৱাই কৃষ্ণক নন্দৰ ঘৰলৈ লৈ যোৱা হৈছিল।

দেৱসেনা অৰ্হনশে সুৰক্ষাকাৰী হৈ থকাৰ বাবেহে কংসই পঠোৱা পুতনা, অঘাসুৰ, বকাসুৰৰ পৰা কৃষ্ণ ৰক্ষা পৰিছিল। কৃষ্ণৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে অসুৰ নিধন কৰিছিল দেৱসেনাই, সমাজৰ আগত প্ৰকাশ কৰাহে হৈছিল নিধনকাৰী কৃষ্ণ বুলি।

গোৱৰ্ধনধাৰী হিচাপে প্ৰখ্যাত অতিলৌকিক কৃষ্ণ এটা প্ৰহেলিকাৰ গাঁথাহে। গোৱৰ্ধন কাণ্ডৰ আগদিনা গধূলি শৰীৰ চৰ্চাৰ প্ৰশিক্ষকজনে কৃষ্ণক মাতি নিছিলহি। তেওঁলোকৰ দলটোৰ সৈতে কৃষ্ণ আৰু বলৰাম গোৱৰ্ধনৰ ওচৰ পাই দেখিছিল গোৱৰ্ধন বিদাৰণৰ কাম ইতিমধ্যে আৰম্ভ হৈ গৈছিল। দেৱ সেনাৰ দলে খাৰ বাৰুদ জ্বলাই নিশাটোৰ ভিতৰতে পাহাৰৰ শিল-মাটি খহাই গাঁত সুৰঙ্গৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল। পুৱালৈ দেৱসেনাৰ বুদ্ধিমৰ্মে কৃষ্ণই সুৰংগৰ সন্মুখভাগত হাতেৰে ধৰি পাহাৰ দঙাৰ দৰে দেখুৱাইছিল মাথোন।

কেশৱ আখ্যাধাৰী কৃষ্ণৰ কেশী নিধনৰ ঘটনাও তেনেই সাধাৰণ। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে, কেশী কোনো ঘোঁৰা নাছিল, অশ্বমুণ্ডৰ দৰে শিৰস্ৰাণ, ঘোঁৰাৰ ছালৰ দৰে কৰচ পৰিধানকাৰী মহাবীৰ কেশা অতি সুন্দৰ পুৰুষ। অশ্বচালনাত শূৰসেন ৰাজ্যত কেশীৰ সমকক্ষ কোনো নাছিল। প্ৰকৃততে কৃষ্ণবেৰীক নীচ দেখুৱাবলৈ কেশীক অশ্ব বুলি দেখুৱাইছে। মুখ বাগৰিবাগৰি এনেধৰণৰ টোটেৱেই ৰৌটো হোৱাৰ অলেখ উদাহৰণ উপন্যাসখনত আছে।

সেইদৰে কংস, কৌৰৱ আদিক দুৰাচাৰী সজোৱাটো দেৱযড়যন্ত্ৰৰ চৰম নিৰ্দেশন। প্ৰজাবৎসল ৰজাকো চলবলৈ

কৌশলে প্ৰজাদ্ৰোহী সজাইছিল দেৱসেনাই। দেৱযড়যন্ত্ৰই বহুসময়ত সাপ হৈ খুটি বেজ হৈ জৰাও উপন্যাসখনিত পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। কংসবধৰ ঘটনাতো চানুৰ-মুস্তিকক দেৱসেনাই কথাবে বিব্ৰত কৰি ৰাখি সুযোগ বুজি অকলশৰীয়া অৱস্থাত কংসক বধৰ বাবে কৃষ্ণক নিৰ্দেশনা দিয়াৰ প্ৰসংগই যড়যন্ত্ৰক জল্জলপটপটকৈ তুলি ধৰে।

দেৱ যড়যন্ত্ৰৰ সবাতোকৈ সাংঘাতিক ৰূপ প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে কিশোৰকৃষ্ণৰ সৰল মনক প্ৰভাৱিত কৰি চতুৰ আৰু সিয়ান ৰূপত গঢ়ি তোলা ঘটনাত। দেৱসেনাৰ অকুষ্ঠ সহায়ত হতভম্ব সাধাৰণ কিশোৰ কৃষ্ণই প্ৰতিটো লৌকিক কাৰ্যক দেৱ সেনাই অতিলৌকিক ৰূপ দিয়াত বাৰম্বাৰ হতভম্ব হয়। গোৱৰ্ধন পাহাৰৰ ঘটনাত আশ্চৰ্যচকিত কৃষ্ণক ইন্দ্ৰই আহি এক প্ৰকাৰে ইন্দ্ৰজালিক ভাৱে চেতনা জগাইছেহি আৰু কৈছে- "তোমাৰ সন্দেহ যথার্থ হৈছে যদিও এতিয়া সকলো কথা তুমি বুজি নাপাব। এটা কথাই জানি-তুমি বিষুৱে তেজেৰেই সৃষ্টি হৈছা, তুমি দেৱতা বিষুৱৰ ঔৰসজাত। গতিকে তোমাৰ লগত মোৰ বিৰোধ মৰ্ত্যৰ মানৱক ভ্ৰমিত কৰি তোমাৰ গৌৰৱ বৃদ্ধিৰ বাবেহে দেখুৱা হৈছে।"

### ৩.১.৪. বিজ্ঞান অৱতাৰণা

অত্যাধুনিক জ্ঞানৰ অধিকাৰী দেৱতাসকলে নৱ আৱিষ্কৃত সা-সুবিধা, কলা-কৌশল আদিৰ বহুল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছিল। অন্যহে নালাগে উন্নত পদ্ধতিৰ আৱিষ্কাৰে যৌনসংসৰ্গ নোহোৱাকৈ মানৱী গৰ্ভত দেৱতাৰ শুক্ৰ স্থাপন কৰিব পৰা হৈছিল। নিষেচিত ভ্ৰূণ এগৰাকীৰ গৰ্ভৰ পৰা আন এগৰাকীলৈ স্থানান্তৰ কৰিব পৰা হৈছিল। যৌনসংসৰ্গ নোহোৱাকৈ মানৱী গৰ্ভত দেৱতাৰ শুক্ৰ সংৰোপন কৰি কৃষ্ণক জন্ম দিয়া হৈছিল আৰু দৈৱকীৰ সপ্তম গৰ্ভক আকৰ্ষণ কৰি দেৱ অনুগামীয়ে ৰোহিনীৰ গৰ্ভত স্থাপন কৰি সংকৰ্ষণৰ দ্বাৰা জন্ম দিয়া হৈছিল বলোৰামক।

উন্নত কাৰিকৰী বিদ্যাৰে যিবোৰ কাম দেৱতাই কৰে, সেইবোৰ সাধাৰণলোকৰ চকুত অলৌকিক কাৰ্য ৰূপে প্ৰতিভাত হয়। বিমানেৰে আকাশ পৰিভ্ৰমণ কৰা, বিধ্বংসী অস্ত্ৰৰে হেজাৰ-হেজাৰ সৈন্যক চকুৰ পচাৰতে নিহত কৰা, দূৰসংযোগেৰে বাৰ্তালাপ কৰা, আকাশবাণীৰ সৃষ্টি কৰা, কৃত্ৰিম আলোকৰে পোহৰ কৰা ইত্যাদি অজস্ৰ কাম মৰ্ত্যবাসীয়ে অলৌকিক বুলিয়েই গণ্য কৰা স্বাভাৱিক। লগতে উল্লেখ্য যে, কৃষ্ণই মদনিকা নামৰ কুঁজী বুঢ়ীগৰাকীৰ কুঁজ নিৰাময় কৰিছিল শৰীৰচৰ্চা জ্ঞানৰ পৰা আহৰিত 'জনা উল্লাপন বিধি'ৰে।

### ৩.১.৫. পশু-পক্ষীৰ অধস্তনৰূপত জনগোষ্ঠী চিত্ৰায়ণ

অৰণ্যত জন্তু-জানোৱাৰ, পশু-পক্ষীৰ লগতে

মানুহো থকাৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰি কৈছে যে তাৰ প্ৰতিটো জনগোষ্ঠীৰে ধাৰণা তেওঁলোক একোটা-একোটা বিশেষ পশু-পক্ষীৰ অধস্তন পুৰুষ। সেইবোৰ পশু-পক্ষীৰ চিহ্ন শৰীৰত ধাৰণ কৰি তেওঁলোকে গৌৰৱ অনুভৱ কৰে। কোনোবাই আকৌ শৰীৰতো বান্ধি লয় সেইবোৰ মৃত প্ৰাণীৰ দেহৰ অংশ, কোনোবাই আঁকি লয় প্ৰতীক চিহ্ন, কোনোবাই পিন্ধে মুখা। সভ্য আৰ্যসকলে সেইবোৰ জনগোষ্ঠীক চিনাকি দিয়ে জন্তু বা পক্ষী হিচাপেহে। সভ্য সকলৰ চকুত সেইবোৰ মানুহ নহয়, পশু বা পক্ষীহে। জনগোষ্ঠীবোৰৰ নামো হয় সেই নিৰ্দিষ্ট পশু-পক্ষীৰ নামেৰে। সেইমতে বিভিন্ন জনগোষ্ঠীৰ নাম হয় - বান্দৰ, ভালুক, মহিষ, বৰাহ, নাগ, গৰুড় ইত্যাদি।

### ৩.১.৬. ব্যৱহাৰিক জ্ঞানৰ প্ৰয়োগ

কুৱলয় হাতীক বধ কৰাৰ প্ৰসংগত অলৌকিকত্ব নহয়, কৃষ্ণৰ ব্যৱহাৰিক জ্ঞানৰ নমুনা পাব পাৰি। কৃষ্ণ বলৰামৰ ওচৰ পোৱাৰ লগে লগে হাতীটোৱে শুৰেৰে তেওঁলোকক মেৰিয়াই ধৰিব খোজোতে কৃষ্ণই ঠাইতে পাক মাৰি ঘূৰিবলৈ ধৰিলে। প্ৰকাণ্ড হাতীটোৰ বাবে চক্ৰাকাৰে ঘূৰাটো সহজ নাছিল। তেনে চেষ্টা কৰিবলৈ যাওঁতে হাতীটোক পগলা হোৱা যেন লগা হৈছিল। এপাকত কৃষ্ণ হাতীটোৰ ঠেঙৰ মাজত সোমাল আৰু মমস্থানত সৰ্বশক্তিৰে ভুকুৱাবলৈ ধৰিলে। কুৱলয় ধৰাশায়ী হ'ল।

### ৩.২. কেন্দ্ৰস্থ : চৰিত্ৰৰ জটিল মনঃস্তাত্ত্বিক ৰূপৰ সৰল ভাঙনি

কৃষ্ণ চৰিত্ৰৰ দুৰ্বোধ্যতাৰ বাবে বহু সময়ত বলে নোৱাৰা শিলক পৰিনামস্বৰ কৰা দি 'বিশ্বাসে মিলয় হৰি তৰ্কে বহুদূৰ' বুলি ৰৈ যাব লগা হয়। তাৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে 'কৃষ্ণবিষ্ণুসুন্দৰ' উপন্যাসত কৃষ্ণৰ দোষ-গুণ আটাইবোৰক সাধাৰণ মানুহৰ মানসিকতাৰ দিশেৰেও উদঙাই দেখুওৱা হৈছে-

#### ৩.২.১. কামবিলাসিতা

ৰমণআগ্ৰহী কৃষ্ণৰ নাৰীৰ প্ৰতি দুৰ্বলতা প্ৰচুৰ। ফলস্বৰূপেই গোপীৰ সৈতে কামকেলিত মন্ত হৈ থাকে। কামনা পীড়িত হোৱাৰ বাবেই নিজৰ কেইবাগৰাকী মহিষী থকাৰ পিছতো প্ৰাগজ্যোতিষপুৰ নৃপতি নৰকাসুৰক পৰাস্ত কৰি ষোল্লশ নাৰীক নিজ অন্তেষপুৰলৈ লৈ যায়, সেই সকলকে ষোল্লশ গোপী বুলি আধ্যাত্মিক ৰহন সনা হয়।

#### ৩.২.২. শ্ৰেষ্ঠত্ব প্ৰত্যাশা

দেৱোত্তৰীয় মৰ্যদাবোধৰ অভিজাত্যই ক্ৰমে অনুক্ৰমে ডাঙৰ হোৱা কৃষ্ণৰ চৰিত্ৰত বয়সৰ জোখাৰে প্ৰভাৱ পেলাইছিল। শ্ৰেষ্ঠত্বৰ খিতাপ অৰ্জনৰ প্ৰসংগত কামবাসনাও

বহু সময়ত চন পৰি ৰোৱা দেখা গৈছে। কামলীলাৰ অন্তত ৰাধাই বুকুচাত উঠিবলৈ মন মেলোতে ৰাধাৰ অজ্ঞাতে আঁতৰি যোৱা, ৰাধাৰ প্ৰেম; পিতৃ-মাতৃৰ প্ৰেমক নেওচি মথুৰালৈ যোৱা আদিত এই ৰূপ লেখকে স্পষ্টকৈ উল্লেখ কৰিছে।

### ৩.২.৩. প্ৰতিশোধপৰায়ণতা

বিষ্ণুপূজা নকৰাৰ বাবেই কংসবধৰ আঁচনি প্ৰস্তুতকৰণ, মথুৰালৈ গৈ মথুৰাবাসীৰ তুলনাত নিজৰ কাপোৰৰ নিঃকিন ৰূপ দেখি ৰাজন্যবৰ্গৰ কাপোৰ ধোৱা 'বজক'ৰ ওচৰত ৰাজকীয় পোচাক দাবী আৰু দাবী মানি নোলোৱাত কৃষ্ণই বজক আৰু বজকৰ সহায়কাৰীক নিধন কৰা, ভীষ্মক জৰাসন্ধৰ প্ৰতি নিৰুৎসাহী কৰিবৰ বাবেই ভীষ্মকৰ জোঁৱাই হোৱা আদি ঘটনাৰে প্ৰতিশোধপৰায়ণতা ৰূপটোক তুলি ধৰিছে। তদুপৰি সত্ৰাজিতৰ ভায়েক প্ৰসেনজিতক নিধন কৰি শ্যামস্কন্ধ মণি লাভৰ পথ প্ৰশস্ত কৰা কথাই আক্ৰোশী মনটোক চিনাক্ত কৰিছে।

### ৩.৩. প্ৰসংগসূত্ৰত যুক্তিৰ উল্লিখন

উপন্যাসখন নিজা দৃষ্টিৰে বৰ্ণনা কৰি যাওঁতে উপন্যাসিক ভূঞাই পাদটীকা বা প্ৰসংগসূত্ৰত তেনে বৰ্ণনাৰ যথার্থ কাৰণ তুলি ধৰিছে। ফলত বিশ্বাসযোগ্যতা আহি পৰিছে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে, বলৰামক নাগ জনগোষ্ঠীয় অংশ হিচাপে উল্লেখ কৰি প্ৰসংগসূত্ৰত লিখিছে এনেদৰে - "বলোৰামৰ সৰল স্বভাৱ, ভোটা বুদ্ধি, শাৰীৰিক শক্তিৰ প্ৰাচুৰ্য, নিচায়ুক্ত দ্ৰব্যলৈ আকৰ্ষণ, পিছৰ জীৱনত কৃষ্ণৰ অন্যান্য কাৰ্য্যৰ সমালোচনা ইত্যাদিবোৰৰ বাবে বলৰামক অনাৰ্যজাত বোলাৰ যথার্থতা আছে।"

আকৌ পশু-পক্ষীৰ অধস্তনৰূপত জনগোষ্ঠী চিত্ৰায়ণ কৰি তাক পাদটীকাত উল্লেখ কৰিছে - "পশু-পক্ষীক উৰ্ধতম পুৰুষ বুলি ভবা আৰু সেইবোৰৰ টোটেম ধাৰণ কৰা বহু জনজাতি এতিয়াও অৰুণাচল, কাৰখণ্ড, অন্ধ্ৰপ্ৰদেশ আদি ৰাজ্যত আছে। সেই হিচাপত কালী নগা এজন জনজাতি দলপতি, তেওঁক বহু ফণা থকা সৰ্প হিচাপে দেখুৱাটো অলৌকিকতা সৃষ্টিৰ প্ৰয়াস মাথোন।

অতি কথা কিছুমানৰ প্ৰচলনেৰে অলৌকিকতা অনাক খৰ্ব কৰি দিয়া অনেক উদাহৰণৰ এটা কংসক অত্যাচাৰী সজাই বসু-দৈৱকীক আৱেগিকভাৱে আঁকোৱালি লোৱাৰ মানসিকতা গুচাই তাৰ সমৰ্থনত পাদটীকাত উল্লেখ কৰিছে এনেদৰে- "ভাগৱতৰ মতে বসুদেৱ আৰু দৈৱকীক শিকলি লগাই অষ্ট প্ৰহৰ কাৰাগাৰত বন্দী কৰি থোৱা হৈছিল। এই ধাৰণাটোৱেই সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ মাজত প্ৰচলিত, যাৰ বাবে বসুদেৱৰ প্ৰতি সকলোৰে দয়া ওপজে। কিন্তু হৰিবংশৰ তথ্যমতে

বসুদেৱ নিজৰ ঘৰতে নজৰবন্দী হৈছে আছিল। ৰাজসভাত তেওঁ নিজৰ পদো হেৰুওৱা নাছিল, সংঘমুখ্যও হৈয়েই আছিল।”

সামৰণিঃ বিষ্ণুপূজা সৰ্বত্ৰ প্ৰচলনৰ উদ্দেশ্যেই সৰল, সাধাৰণ এটি মানৱ শিশুক জ্ঞান অৱস্থাতে সংকৰ্ষণৰ চাতুৰি কৰি গৰ্ভস্থ কৰাই, তাৰ মন-মগজুক পৰিচালিত কৰি বিষ্ণু আৰু বিষ্ণুৰ অনুগামীয়ে কেনেকৈ তীক্ষ্ণ আৰু কপটৰ চূড়ামণি ৰূপ দিলে, তাৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ লৌকিক বৰ্ণন ‘কৃষ্ণবিষ্ণুসুদেৱ’ত পাওঁ। যশোদা নন্দৰ ছত্ৰছায়াত পুত্ৰনা বধৰ ঘটনাৰে পূৰ্ণ অলৌকিকত্বক প্ৰথমে শিশু কৃষ্ণত আৰোপ কৰা হৈছে, যি ঘটনাক লেখকে ব্যৱচ্ছেদ কৰিছে দেখিবলৈ কিছু কুৎসিৎ কংসৰ পৰিচাৰিকা এজনীক দেৱসেনাই যমুনাৰ পানীত পেলাই, পানী উপৰ্যুপৰি খুৱাই, শৰীৰ নিধন কৰি তাইৰ শৱদেহৰ উন্মুক্ত বক্ষয়ুগলত শিশু কৃষ্ণক ৰাখি দিয়াৰ উল্লেখ কৰি। তেতিয়া কৃষ্ণই সংসাৰৰ একো ভূ-ভাই নেপায়। দামোদৰ ৰূপক দৰ্শাই অৰ্জুন ভঞ্জন কৰা, দুষ্টক দমনৰ উদ্দেশ্যে কেশী, ব্যোম অসুৰক বধি কেশৱ নাম লোৱা আদি ঘটনা কৃষ্ণই আওভাও নেপাওঁতেই বিষ্ণুদাসে সমাপন কৰে। সকলোতকৈ ডাঙৰ কথাটো হ’ল প্ৰচাৰধৰ্মিতা। যিবোৰ অলৌকিক ঘটনা কৃষ্ণৰ দ্বাৰা সাধিত হোৱাৰ খবৰ বিয়পি থাকে সেই ঘটনাৰ দৰ্শন কেৱল গোপশিশু তথা বিষ্ণুদাসৰহে হয়। বিষ্ণুদাসে বৌজাল-বৌজাল কৰা অলৌকিক ঘটনাই জনৱৰত অতিলৌকিক হৈ প্ৰচাৰিত হৈ থাকে- এনে যথার্থ বৰ্ণনাই ঔপন্যাসিকৰ মৌলিকত্বক প্ৰভাৱশালীতা দান কৰিছে।

‘মানুহে কৃতকৰ্মৰ ফল জীৱন কালতে ভুগিব লাগে’- আত্মবাক্যশাৰী কৃষ্ণৰ শেষৰ জীৱনত ফলিওৱাৰ চিত্ৰ উল্লেখ কৰি ঔপন্যাসৰ সামৰণি অংশত কৃষ্ণৰ জীৱনৰ বিয়লি বেলাক পূৰ্ণ ৰূপত মানৱায়ন কৰা হৈছে। এই বৰ্ণনাত কৃষ্ণ চৰিত্ৰৰ প্ৰতি লেখকৰ শ্লেষ প্ৰতিভাত হৈছে। উল্লেখযোগ্য যে, সাধাৰণে অসাধাৰণক শ্লেষ কৰিলেহে অস্বাভাৱিক, সাধাৰণে সাধাৰণক কৰাৰ দৰে কৰা স্বাভাৱিক শ্লেষেও কৃষ্ণক দেৱতায়নৰ বিপৰীতে মানৱায়ন কৰাকে সূচায়।

লেখকে সামৰণিত কৈছে- যদুবংশ এদিন নিজৰ ভিতৰতে কটাকটি, মৰামৰি কৰি ধ্বংস হ’ল। তিলতিলকৈ যি গৌৰৱ, যি ক্ষমতা যদুসকলৰ বাবে কৃষ্ণই পুঞ্জীভূত কৰিছিল, ক্ষমতালোভীৰ কুপাত সেই গৌৰৱ চূৰমাৰ হ’ল। ৰুক্মিণী আৰু জাম্বৱতীয়ে জুইত আত্মাৰ্হতি দিলে, সত্যভামা বনলৈ গৈ তপস্যাত ৰত হ’ল। গোটেই জীৱন ধৰ্ম-কৰ্ম কৰি ধৰ্মৰাজ যুধিষ্ঠিৰৰ শেষত যি সন্মান লৈ মহাপ্ৰস্থানৰ পথৰ গতি সম্ভৱ হৈছিল, ঈশ্বৰ আসন লাভ কৰা কৃষ্ণই তেনে সন্মান লৈ দেহত্যাগ কৰাও সম্ভৱ নহ’ল। সামান্য ব্যাধৰ শৰত কৃষ্ণই প্ৰাণত্যাগ কৰিব লগা হ’ল। ধৰ্মযুদ্ধৰ এইয়াই হৈছিল

পৰিণতি। ঘৰ-বাৰী ক’তো কৃষ্ণই শাস্তি নাপালে। বৃন্দাবনবিলাসী, মথুৰা-দ্বাৰকা আৰ্য্যৱৰ্তৰ একনায়ক, ৰজাৰো ৰজা, কুৰু-পাণ্ডৱৰ ধৰ্মযুদ্ধৰ পুৰোহিত কৃষ্ণই অতি সাধাৰণ ভাৱে কৰুণ মৃত্যুৰে বিদায় ল’লে।

এনেকৈ সাধাৰণ মন, জীৱন আৰু মৰণ বৰ্ণনা কৰি কৃষ্ণৰ চৰিত্ৰক মানৱায়ন কৰি, বিশিষ্ট পদবী বিষ্ণুৰ স্বেচ্ছাচাৰিতাক দেৱতাৰ হঠকাৰীতা ৰূপত প্ৰকাশ কৰি সামৰণি পেলোৱা ঔপন্যাসখনত ঐতিহাসিক চৰিত্ৰ কৃষ্ণক দেৱতাৰ পৰিবৰ্তে মানুহৰ ধৰা তলত থৈ চোৱাৰ যি বাস্তৱসন্মত দৃষ্টিভংগী, সি ঔপন্যাস সাহিত্যত নৱ্যদৃষ্টি আৰু নব্যসৃষ্টিৰ ফচল। সেয়েহে এই বিষয়ত আৰু অধিক অধ্যয়নৰ থল আছে।

**আধাৰ গ্ৰন্থ :**

ভূঞা, ড० খৰ্গেশ্বৰঃ কৃষ্ণবিষ্ণুসুদেৱ, দ্বিতীয় প্ৰকাশ, ২০১৯  
দ্যা আৰ্য্যপ্ৰিন্টাৰ, গুৱাহাটী।

## অসমীয়া উপন্যাসৰ শেহতীয়া ধাৰা (মনস্তাত্ত্বিক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰে)

মায়াশ্ৰী গোস্বামী  
অসমীয়া বিভাগ, শিৱসাগৰ কলেজ

### প্ৰস্তাৱনা :

অসমীয়া উপন্যাস সাহিত্যৰ জন্ম হয় ঊনবিংশ শতিকাৰ দ্বিতীয়াদ্বিত। ইংৰাজ লেখক জন ৱানিয়ানৰ পিলগ্ৰিমছ প্ৰগেছৰ অসমীয়া অনুবাদ ‘জাত্ৰিকৰ জাত্ৰা’, ‘অৰুণোদই’ত প্ৰকাশিত হোৱাৰ লগে লগেই অসমীয়া উপন্যাস দুৱাৰ মুকলি হ’ল। কিন্তু অসমীয়া উপন্যাসৰ আনুষ্ঠানিক শুভাৰম্ভ হয় পদ্মনাথ গৌঁহাই বৰুৱাৰ কাপতহে। ১৮১২-১৩ শক (ইংৰাজী ১৮৯০ চন)ত ‘বিজুলী’ আলোচনীত খণ্ড খণ্ডকৈ প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল ‘ভানুমতী’ নামৰ ঐতিহাসিক উপন্যাসখনে। পদ্মনাথ গৌঁহাই বৰুৱাৰ দ্বাৰা ৰচিত এই ভানুমতী উপন্যাসখনেই অসমীয়া ভাষাৰ প্ৰথম উপন্যাসৰূপে স্বীকৃত। পদ্মনাথ গৌঁহাই বৰুৱাৰ পিছত উপন্যাস সত্ৰাট বৰ্জনীকান্ত বৰদলৈ হাতত অসমীয়া উপন্যাসে সুকীয়া মাত্ৰা আৰু নৱ ৰূপেৰে আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰি জিলিকি উঠিল।

পদ্মনাথ বৰ্জনীকান্তৰ হাততেই জন্ম লাভ কৰা অসমীয়া উপন্যাসে দশকে দশকে নতুন চিন্তা চেতনা তথা বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰিলে। একবিংশ শতিকাৰ উপন্যাস সমূহো ইয়াৰ ব্যতিক্ৰম নহয়। কেইগৰাকীমান বিশিষ্ট উপন্যাসিকৰ হাতত অসমীয়া উপন্যাসে ন ন ৰূপত আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰি পাঠকক আনন্দৰ খোৰাক যোগোৱাৰ লগতে চিন্তাৰ উন্মেষো ঘটাইছে। সত্য তথ্য সম্বলিত বহু উপন্যাসে পাঠকৰ পৰা সমাদৰহে লাভ কৰিছে।

### নিৰ্বাচিত উপন্যাস :

অসমীয়া উপন্যাসৰ শেহতীয়া ধাৰা বিশেষকৈ মনস্তাত্ত্বিক দৃষ্টিভঙ্গীৰে আলোচনা কৰিবলৈ যাওঁতে কেইগৰাকীমান উপন্যাসিকৰ বচা বচা চাৰিখন উপন্যাসৰ আধাৰত আলোকপাত কৰিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে। সেই অনুসৰি নিৰ্বাচিত চাৰিখন উপন্যাস হ’ল-

- ১) দেও লাংখুই
- ২) বৰদোৱানী
- ৩) দ্বিতীয়া
- ৪) জিন্নৎ

এই চাৰিওখন ভিন্নধৰ্মী উপন্যাস হ’লেও কিছু কিছু ক্ষেত্ৰত চাৰিওখনৰ সাদৃশ্যও দৃষ্টিগোচৰ হয়। তাৰে আধাৰত এই আলোচনাটি আগবঢ়োৱা হৈছে। একো একোটা পৰিবেশৰ বিস্তৃত বৰ্ণনাৰ যোগেদি উপন্যাসিকে কাহিনীভাগ আগবঢ়াই দিয়া পৰিলক্ষিত হৈছে কেওখন উপন্যাসতেই। যথা-

“খলা এখন অত্যন্ত সৰু ৰাজ্য। খলা ৰাজ্য গোভাৰ তলতীয়া নহয়। জয়ন্তীয়া ৰাজ্যৰ লগত খলাৰ মিত্ৰতা থকাৰ

কাৰণে গোভাৰজাই কেতিয়াও খলাক নিজৰ তলতীয়া কৰি লোৱাৰ চেষ্টা কৰা নাই। অৱশ্যে গোভা ৰজা সাধুকুমাৰ আগ্ৰাসী ৰজাও নহয়। নিজৰ ব্যক্তিত্ব আৰু ৰাজনৈতিক কুশলতাৰে গোভা আৰু জয়ন্তীয়াৰ দৰে বৃহৎ আৰু শক্তিশালী ৰাজ্য দুখনৰ লগতে ওচৰ-চুবুৰীয়া সকলো ৰাজ্যৰ লগত সন্তোৰেৰে চলিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে গংগাৱতী। অৱশ্যে লালুং ৰাজ্যসমূহৰ মাজত বিৰোধ নাই বুলিলেই হয়। চুবুৰীয়া মিকিৰ সকলৰ লগতো বন্ধুত্বপূৰ্ণ সম্পৰ্ক ৰক্ষা কৰি চলিছে লালুং ৰাজ্যসমূহে। অন্যান্য চুবুৰীয়া ৰাজ্যসমূহৰ লগতো সম্পৰ্ক ভালেই। অৱশ্যে ডিমাৰঙৰ কছাৰী ৰজা গজৰাজ বডচাৰ শক্তিশালী উত্থানৰ পিছত কছাৰী ৰাজ্যৰ চুবুৰীয়া হিচাপে এই অঞ্চলৰ ৰজা সকল ৰাজ্যৰ নিৰাপত্তা আৰু স্বাধীনতাৰ প্ৰশ্নত চিন্তিত হৈ পৰিছে। বিশেষকৈ লালুং ৰজাসকল। সেয়েহে প্ৰতিবছৰে হোৱা দৰবাৰবোৰতকৈ আজি হ’লগীয়া সভাখনৰ ৰাজনৈতিক গুৰুত্ব অধিক। আজি কছাৰী ৰাজ্যৰ লগত ৰাজনৈতিক সম্পৰ্ক লৈ বিশেষভাৱে আলোচনা হোৱাৰ কথা।”

(দেও লাংখুই, পৃষ্ঠা-১২৭)

‘বৰদোৱানীত’ এক অলৌকিক পৰিবেশৰ বৰ্ণনাৰ যোগেদি পাঠকক উৎকৰ্ষাৰ অৱকাশ দিছে। তাৰ নিদৰ্শন-

“গুৰুজনাই সাতদিন সাত ৰাতি ধৰি ‘চিহ্নযাত্ৰা’ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰিছিল। মাছ বেচিবলৈ অহা পোহাৰী সেয়া চাই ভেবা লাগিলতে গোটেই সোপা মাছ মৰিল। তাই ওচৰৰে পুখুৰীৰ পানী ছটিয়াওঁতেই পুনৰ প্ৰাণ পাই উঠিল মাছখিনিয়ে। তাৰ অনেক দিনৰ পিছত এক ব্ৰাহ্মণে নিজৰ সদ্যমৃত শিশু সন্তানটি গাঁত খান্দি পুতি থ’লে। পোহাৰীয়ে গম পাই বুটলি আনি সেই পুখুৰীৰ পানীত গা ধুৱাই দিয়াত সিও জী উঠিল। পাছে ঘটনাটি লুকাই নাথাকিল। গুৰুজনাবোৰে কাণত পৰিলগৈ। তেৰাই ভাবিলে, এনে অলৌকিক পুখুৰীৰ সহায়তে সকলো মানুহেই মৰিও পুনৰ্জীৱন পাব। কিন্তু তেনে হ’বলৈ দিলেতো পুখুৰীৰ ভাৰ বাঢ়ি যাব। ঠগ প্ৰৱৰ্ত্তক আৰু অসৎ মানুহবোৰৰো অন্তনপৰা হ’ব। সেয়ে পুখুৰীটো পোতাই তাত ওখকৈ দৌল নিৰ্মাণ কৰোৱালে। দৌলত দৌল মন্দিৰৰো প্ৰতিষ্ঠা কৰা হ’ল।”

(বৰদোৱানী, পৃষ্ঠা-১৪৮)

‘দ্বিতীয়া’ উপন্যাসৰ কিছু কিছু বৰ্ণনা অতি জীৱন্ত আৰু প্ৰাণৱন্ত। যথা-

“আমাৰ ঘৰৰ পৰা গভীৰ অৰণ্যলৈ বৰ বেছি দূৰ বাট নহয় যেন লাগে। সাউদে কয়, হাবিখন বৰ বিশাল আৰু গভীৰ। অৰণ্যখনলৈ সোমাই গ’লে কিছু দূৰলৈ চৰাই-চিৰিকতিৰ মাত শুনা যায়। বিভিন্ন প্ৰকাৰৰ চৰাইৰ মাত। কিছুমান চৰাইৰ মাত সাউদে নিজেও চিনি নাপায়। কিন্তু হাবিখনৰ যিমানেই গভীৰলৈ যোৱা যায় যিমানেই বাঘ খোঙৰ মাতহে শুনিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। সাউদে নিজে কেতিয়াও গভীৰলৈ যোৱা নাই। হাবিখনৰ গভীৰতনো কেনে ভয়াবহতাই বাস কৰি আছে চাবলৈ সাউদৰ বৰ হেঁপাহ। কিন্তু তাকে কৰিবলৈ সময়-সুবিধা গোটাৰ পৰা নাই। কামৰ পৰা অলপমান আহৰি পালেই হাবিলৈ যোৱাৰ কথা ভাবে। তেওঁৰ কেইজনমান চিকাৰী বন্ধু আছে। সেই পাৰ্গত চিকাৰী-সখীয়েক কেইজনৰ সৈতে কেইবাবাৰো গভীৰ হাবিলৈ যোৱাৰ যো-জা কৰিছিল। কিন্তু জেউতিৰ বাধাতে সেইবোৰ নৈ নুঠিল। জেউতিৰ বাধা। বাঘ-ঘোং, সাপৰ নাম শুনিলেই জেউতিয়ে ভয় কৰিছিল। তেওঁৰ পুৰুষোচিত হাবিয়াস জেউতিৰ মুখলৈ চায়েই চোঁচা পৰিছিল।” (দ্বিতীয়া, পৃষ্ঠা-৪৩)

‘জিন্নৎ’ উপন্যাসৰ বিস্তৃত বৰ্ণনাই আমাক কিছু তথ্যৰো যোগান ধৰে। তাৰ নিদৰ্শন-

“১৯৪৭ চনত ভাৰতে স্বাধীনতা ঘোষণা কৰাৰ সমান্তৰালভাৱে ভাৰত বিভক্ত হৈ পৰিছিল হিন্দু প্ৰধান ভাৰত আৰু মুছলমান প্ৰধান পাকিস্তানৰূপে। সেই সময়তে ব্যক্তিগত আইনৰ প্ৰসংগ উঠে আৰু গণতান্ত্ৰিক দেশ হিচাপে এই অধিকাৰ প্ৰয়োগৰ অধিকাৰ সকলোকে দিয়া হ’ল। তাৰ পাছত বহু

প্ৰয়োজনত বহুবাৰ হিন্দু ব্যক্তিগত আইনৰ সংশোধন হ’লেও মুছলিম ব্যক্তিগত আইন অপৰিৱৰ্তিত হৈ থাকে। শ্বাহবানুৰ কেছটোলৈ চা চোন, নহ’লে এগৰাকী মাথো অসহায় মহিলাই পোৱা ন্যায়ৰ বিৰুদ্ধাচৰণ কৰি কেৱল মুন্সাইৰ ৰাজপথতে তিনি লাখ মুছলমান ওলাই আহি বিক্ষোভ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰাৰ মানসিকতা ৰাখিলেহেঁতেননে? বুজিছ, মানুহবোৰে বৰ সোনকালে সকলো পাহৰি পেলালে। দেশ বিভাজনৰ কাহিনী, উদ্দেশ্য সকলো ইতিহাস হ’ল, গণতন্ত্ৰৰ সংজ্ঞা ময়িমূৰ হ’ল। এনেও নহয় যে কোনো মুছলমান লোকে মুছলিম ৰ’মেনছ এক্ট’ ১৯৮৬ ৰ বিৰুদ্ধে মাত মতা নাছিল, আনকি তদানীন্তন কেবিনেট মিনিষ্টাৰ আৰিফ মহম্মদ খানোও বিলখনৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰিছিল। একো নহ’ল পিছে, একো নহ’ল.....। প্ৰত্যেকদিনা এবুকু হতাশা লৈ এই ইতিহাস সামৰিছিল চাবাই।”

(জিন্নৎ, পৃষ্ঠা-১৪৮)

বিষয়বস্তু :

আলোচিত চাৰিওখন উপন্যাসৰ বিষয় বৈচিত্ৰ্যলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিলে দেখা যায় প্ৰায় প্ৰতিখন উপন্যাসৰ পটভূমি সুকীয়া সুকীয়া। কিম্বদন্তি, লোককথা, অন্ধবিশ্বাস আৰু যৌতুকজনিত বিবিধ সমস্যাৰ আধাৰত কাহিনীসমূহ অৱধাৰিত হৈছে। দেও লাংখুই উপন্যাসত উপন্যাসিকা ৰীতা চৌধুৰীয়ে বুৰঞ্জীৰ পৰা কিছু সমল লৈ তিৰা সকলৰ সমাজ জীৱনক অৱলোকন কৰি বাস্তৱ আৰু কল্পনাৰ সংমিশ্ৰণত এটি কৰুণ কাহিনী উপস্থাপন কৰিছে। ‘জেঙোল বলছ’ শীৰ্ষক পুথি, লাণ্ডু ৰজা জোঙাল বলছৰ ঐতিহাসিক কিম্বদন্তি কাহিনী আৰু ‘বসুন্ধৰী খান’ নামৰ দুটা প্ৰবন্ধৰ পৰা সমল লৈ উপন্যাসখন ৰচনা কৰাৰ লগতে প্ৰচলিত কিম্বদন্তি আৰু মৌখিক বুৰঞ্জীৰ ওপৰত বেছি নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিছিল। বিক্ষিপ্ত আৰু পৰস্পৰ বিৰোধী তথ্য সমূহৰ মাজৰ পৰা নিজস্ব অন্তৰ্দৃষ্টিৰে প্ৰতাপ সিংহ চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভা, আৰিমন্ত গংগাৱতী, ৰত্নসিংহ-লখাইতৰা, জোঙাল বলছ-সুকোমলা আদিৰ জীৱনৰ কিছু কৰুণ অধ্যায় উপন্যাসখনৰ আধাৰত উপস্থাপন কৰিছে। তেৰবহুৰৰ গভীৰ অধ্যয়নৰ ফলশ্ৰুতিত জন্ম লাভ কৰা এইখন অসমীয়া কিম্বদন্তিমূলক উপন্যাস সাহিত্যৰ এখনি আপুৰুগীয়া দলিল হিচাপে চিহ্নিত হৈ ৰ’ব।

মাত্ৰ কেইবছৰমান আগতেহে অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতত আত্মপ্ৰকাশ কৰা এগৰাকী অতি জনপ্ৰিয় আৰু সংবেদনশীল লেখিকা হ’ল মণিকুন্তলা ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য। ২০০৬ চনত প্ৰকাশ পোৱা তেওঁৰ এখন উপন্যাস হ’ল ‘বৰদোৱানী’। “অফুৰন্ত প্ৰেমৰ আকুলতা আৰু বাস্তৱ জীৱনৰ কৰ্তব্যৰ পৰিভ্ৰমণৰে এয়া এক সৰল গ্ৰাম্য কৃষক সমাজৰ কাহিনী বৰদোৱানী।” এজন পুৰুষে দুগৰাকী স্ত্ৰীৰ পাণি গ্ৰহণ কৰাৰ ফলত কি ৰূপ ধাৰণ কৰিব পাৰে এখন ঘৰে, ক্ষণিকৰ

উভেজনাৰে যিকোনো সিদ্ধান্ত মুহূৰ্ততে গ্ৰহণ কৰি নতুন প্ৰজন্মই সৌজন্যহীনতা আৰু অদূৰদৰ্শিতাৰে কিদৰে যোদালি পেলাইছে গাঁৱৰ শাস্ত সমাহিত পৰিবেশক, তাৰেই চিত্ৰ অতি সুন্দৰ বৰ্ণনা আৰু হৃদয়স্পৰ্শী ভাষাৰে ঔপন্যাসিকে বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে।

মধুৰতম সময়, গুলঞ্চি ফুলৰ মায়া, আনন্দৰ সন্ধানত, ৰূপালী পৃথিৱী আদি উপন্যাস ৰচনা কৰি জনপ্ৰিয়তা অৰ্জন কৰা অধ্যাপিকা ৰত্না দত্তৰ ২০০২ বৰ্ষত প্ৰকাশিত আন এখন অতি কৰুণ ৰসাত্মক উপন্যাস হ'ল 'দ্বিতীয়া'। সাহিত্যৰথী ৰসৰাজ লক্ষ্মীনাথ বেজবৰুৱাৰ 'বুঢ়ী আইৰ সাধু'ৰ তেজীমলা নামৰ সাধুটোৰ তেজীমলাৰ মাহীমাকক কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে লৈ এই উপন্যাসখন ৰচনা কৰা হৈছে। লোক কথাকাহিনীক পটভূমি হিচাপে লৈ 'দ্বিতীয়া' উপন্যাসখন ৰচনা কৰোঁতে লেখিকাৰ মনলৈ কেইটামান প্ৰশ্ন আহিছিল আৰু পিচলৈ দৰ্শন আৰু মনোবিজ্ঞানৰ অধ্যয়নে সেই প্ৰশ্নৰ সমাধানো দিছিল। *Tejimala and the wicked step-mother* নামৰ ইংৰাজীৰ পাঠটোত তেজীমলাৰ মাহীমাকক *wicked* হিচাপে অংকন কৰা হৈছে। সেই কাহিনীটো পঢ়িও লেখিকাগৰাকীৰ মনলৈ নানান প্ৰশ্নৰ উদয় হৈছিল। তেজীমলাৰ মাহীমাক, অৰ্থাৎ সাউদৰ দ্বিতীয় পত্নী গৰাকী কিয়নো ইমান নিষ্ঠুৰ বা হৃদয়হীনা হ'ল, যাৰ বাবে তেওঁ সতিনীয়েকৰ জীয়েক তেজীমলাক নিৰ্মমভাৱে হত্যা কৰিলে। সেই কাহিনীটোকে মনোবৈজ্ঞানিক দৃষ্টিৰে বিশ্লেষণ কৰি 'দ্বিতীয়া' উপন্যাসখনৰ কাহিনী উপস্থাপন কৰা হৈছে। তেজীমলাৰ কাহিনীটো পঢ়ি প্ৰতিজন পঢ়ুৱৈৰ মনত মাহীমাক গৰাকীৰ প্ৰতি এক ঘৃণা বা বিতৃষ্ণাৰ ভাবে জুমুৰি দিব। কিন্তু এগৰাকী মহিলা লেখিকা হিচাপে এই মাহীমাক গৰাকীৰ অপকৰ্ম সমূহ অতি আন্তৰিকতাৰে আৰু যুক্তিনিষ্ঠতাৰে বিশ্লেষণ কৰি আবেদনময়ী ভাষাৰে বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে।

টুনা গৌতমৰ ২০০৬ বৰ্ষত প্ৰকাশিত প্ৰথমখন উপন্যাস হ'ল 'জিৱৎ'। জিৱৎ ব্যভিচাৰী পুৰুষৰ বিৰুদ্ধে নিৰ্যাতিতা নাৰীৰ এক জেহাদ। শাৰীৰিক, মৌন, মৌখিক, আবেগিক আৰু অৰ্থনৈতিক আতিশৰ্ষাৰে নিৰ্যাতিতা ৰৌচন নামৰ কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰিত্ৰটোৱে স্বামীৰ অন্যায়ে তালোকৰ বিৰুদ্ধে ন্যায়েৰ যুদ্ধত জিকি দেশজুৰি চাঞ্চল্যৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছিল। ন্যায় যুঁজৰ সুদীৰ্ঘ বাৰ বছৰৰ পিছত প্ৰাপ্তি আহিলেও ৰৌচন কিন্তু একেবাৰেই সুখী নহয়। এই কাহিনীটোকেই সুন্দৰ বৰ্ণনা শৈলীৰে টুনা গৌতমে মনোগ্ৰাহী ৰূপত উপস্থাপন কৰিছে।

#### কাহিনী উপস্থাপন :

কাহিনী উপস্থাপন পদ্ধতিত সাধাৰণতে ঔপন্যাসিক সকলে চাৰিটা পদ্ধতিৰ সহায়ত কাহিনীভাগ

আগবঢ়াই নিয়ে। সেই কেইটা হ'ল-

- ১) ঔপন্যাসিকে প্ৰথম পুৰুষত নিজৰ কাহিনী বৰ্ণনা কৰিব পাৰে ;
- ২) নিজে পৰ্য্যবেক্ষণ কৰা কাহিনী প্ৰথম পুৰুষত ঔপন্যাসিকে ক'ব পাৰে,
- ৩) চৰিত্ৰৰ ভিতৰত নোসোমোৱাকৈ আৰু নিজা মন্তব্য নিদিয়াকৈ লেখকে বস্তুনিষ্ঠ বৰ্ণনা দিব পাৰে।
- ৪) চৰিত্ৰৰ মনৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰবেশ কৰি কি ঘটিছে তাৰ বৰ্ণনা নিজা মত সহ দিব পাৰে।

দেওলাংখুই উপন্যাসত ঔপন্যাসিকা গৰাকীয়ে চৰিত্ৰৰ মনৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰবেশ কৰি কি ঘটিছে তাৰ বৰ্ণনা অতি সজীৱ ভাৱে উপস্থাপন কৰিছে। উদাহৰণ-

“লাজ সংকোচত তল মূৰ কৰি বহি আছে চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভা। শশঃমাতাই তেওঁক যথেষ্ট মৰম কৰে। প্ৰশ্নয়ো দিয়ে। তথাপিও তেওঁৰ গভীৰ মুখখন দেখিলে কিয় জানো ভয় লাগে। চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভাৰ ভাৱ হয়- মাকৰ উপস্থিতিৰ কাৰণেই কিজানি ৰজা প্ৰতাপ চন্দ্ৰই অনবৰতে তাইৰ লগত মগ্ন হৈ থাকিবলৈ সাহস নকৰে। অন্যথাই হয়তো তেওঁ ৰাজা শাসনলৈয়ো পিঠি দিলেহেঁতেন। চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভাই সকলো সময়তে সাজি কাচি থকাটো কামনা কৰে প্ৰতাপচন্দ্ৰই। তেওঁৰ প্ৰতি চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভাই সামান্যতম অনাগ্ৰহ দেখুৱালেও ক্ষুণ্ণ হয় চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভা। ঘৰত থকা সময়খিনিত অনবৰতে প্ৰতাপচন্দ্ৰৰ লগে লগে থাকিব লাগে। শাখমাতাৰ উপস্থিতিয়ে সেয়েহে চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভাক অনেক সকাহ দিয়ে। মাকৰ ঘৰৰ পৰা লৈ অহা কামজপীয়া কুমাৰে গঢ়া মাটিৰ পুতলাবোৰ এটা পেৰাত সংগোপনে থোৱা আছে শয়নকক্ষত। সুবিধা পালেই উলিয়াই লৈ খেলাত মগ্ন হৈ থাকে চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভা। প্ৰতাপচন্দ্ৰই তেনে সময়ত মৰম কৰিবলৈ নাহিলেই চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভাই ভাল পায়। মাজে মাজে চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভাৰ ভাৱ হয় চন্দ্ৰপ্ৰভাৰ পুতলাৰ পেৰাটোক যেন বজাই ঈৰ্ষা কৰে।

দেওলাংখুই, ৪২)

'দ্বিতীয়া' উপন্যাসত দেখা গৈছে যে নায়িকাই প্ৰথম পুৰুষত নিজৰ কাহিনী বৰ্ণনা কৰি গৈছে। উদাহৰণ-

“মোৰ মৃত্যু কেতিয়া হ'ব বাৰু। মৃত্যু বৰ সুখময় অনুভূতি নেকি? আজিকালি জাৰৰ দিনবোৰত মোৰ বৰ কষ্ট হয়। বেলিটো পলমকৈ ওলায়, সোনকালে আন্ধাৰ হয়। মোৰ বৰ জাৰ লাগে। জাৰ লাগিলেই ঘৰলৈ মনত পৰে, ঘৰৰ শোৱাপাটা, উমাল কাপোৰ কানি মোৰ মনত পৰে। গাটো মাজে মাজে বিৰায়। আঁঠুত বিৰায়, কঁকালত বিৰায়। জাৰকালি শৰীৰটো টানি ফুৰিবলৈ মোৰ বৰ কষ্ট হয়। কেতিয়াবা গভীৰ হাবিলৈ গুচি যাওঁ, বাঘ-ঘোঙে খায় যদি খাওক। নাই, মোৰ মৃত্যু ইমান সহজ নহয়। মই মাত্ৰ খোজকাটো- গৈ থাকো। ইখন গাঁৱৰ পৰা সিখন গাঁৱলৈ যাওঁ, এটা অঞ্চলৰ পৰা আন



এটা অঞ্চললৈ যাওঁ।” (দ্বিতীয়া, পৃষ্ঠা- ৯৭)

‘বৰদোৱানী’ এখন অনন্যধৰ্মী উপন্যাস। এইখন উপন্যাসতো লেখিকাই চৰিত্ৰৰ মনৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰৱেশ কৰি তাৰ বৰ্ণনা নিজা মত সহ আলংকাৰিক ভাষাৰে উপস্থাপন কৰিছে। উদাহৰণ-

“গধূলিৰ কাৰণে গাখীৰ তপতাই থকা বৰদোৱানীৰ দুচকু বাস্পাকুল হৈ আহিল। হয়, পুণ্যধৰ এক সৰ্পৰাজ। ধানো খাম, চাউলো খাম, তোকো খাম বুলি তাইক জোকাই বং চাই সি ওৰোটো নিশা অজগৰৰ দৰে মেৰিয়াই ধৰি থাকে তাইক। আৰু তাই হৈ উঠে চম্পাৱতী। চম্পাৱতী।। আজিৰ পৰা চম্পাৱতী এলাগী হ’ব..... সৌৱা, দিওঁ নিদিওঁকৈ খোজ দিয়া বেনুমাইহে আজিৰ পৰা চম্পাৱতী হ’ব।”

(বৰদোৱানী, পৃষ্ঠা-৩৬)

‘জিন্নৎ’ উপন্যাসতো উপন্যাসিকা গৰাকীয়ে মূল চৰিত্ৰ ৰৌচনৰ মনৰ ভিতৰত প্ৰৱেশ কৰি কিছু বৰ্ণনাৰ দ্বাৰা নিজা মতামত ব্যক্ত কৰিব বিচাৰিছে এনেদৰে-

এই যে আনোৱাৰ আজি আহিব বুলি হালিমাই সোঁৱৰাই থৈ গ’ল, ভাল নালাগিল ৰৌচনৰ। তেওঁ অহা দেখিলেই ৰৌচন সংকুচিত হৈ পৰে ভিতৰি ভিতৰি। ভালে থাকক তেওঁ- এই শুভ ইচ্ছা আছে তাইৰ আনোৱাৰৰ প্ৰতি, স্বামী হিচাপে কৰ্তব্য, নিষ্ঠা সকলো আছে। কিন্তু তাইৰ ভয় লাগে, প্ৰথমেই শুনিব লাগিব তাগিদা; আৰু তেওঁৰ সেই বিকৃত যৌনাচাৰৰ কাহিনী। বাধ্য হৈ শূনাৰ পাছত বহুদিনলৈ ঘিণ ঘিণ ভাবটো নাযায় ৰৌচনৰ।”

(জিন্নৎ, পৃষ্ঠা- ৫৭)

**উপন্যাসৰ গদ্য শৈলী :**

মাজে মাজে কঠিন শব্দচয়নেৰে মালাধাৰিৰ দৰে গৰ্খা বাক্যবোৰেও ৰীতা চৌধুৰীৰ ‘দেওলাংখুই’ৰ গদ্যশৈলীৰ এক সুকীয়া মাত্ৰা প্ৰদান কৰিছে।

“ক’ত লুকাই আছিল এই জিঘাংসাত বিকৃত , ঈৰ্ষাত অস্থিৰ, ক্ৰোধত উন্মাদ প্ৰতাপচন্দ্ৰ ? ..... চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰভাক ক্ষত বিক্ষত কৰি তুলিও নিৰ্বাপিত হোৱা নাই প্ৰতাপচন্দ্ৰৰ বুকুত দাউ দাউকৈ জ্বলি উঠা ক্ৰোধৰ অগ্নিকুণ্ড। ..... প্ৰতিটো শব্দই একো একোটা তীক্ষ্ণাশ্ৰু কাদ হৈ উৰি উৰি আহি শালি ধৰিছেই চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰভাক।” (পৃষ্ঠা- ৫৯)

অত্যাধিক তৎসম শব্দৰ প্ৰয়োগে উপন্যাসখনৰ সৌন্দৰ্য্য স্নান কৰা নাই, বৰঞ্চ বাঢ়িছেহে। তদুপৰি অতি চমু বাক্যৰীতি আৰু দীঘলীয়া বাক্য গাঁথনিয়ো ৰীতা চৌধুৰীৰ গদ্য শৈলীক এক নিজস্ব বৈশিষ্ট্য প্ৰদান কৰিছে।

‘বৰদোৱানী’ৰ গদ্যৰীতিও ব্যঞ্জনধৰ্মী একো একোটা সজীৰ চিত্ৰ প্ৰদৰ্শন কৰাত লেখিকাগৰাকী সিদ্ধহস্ত যেন অনুভৱ হয়।

সি তাইক আদৰ স্পৰ্শৰে সজীৰ কৰি তুলিলে। একুৰা জুই হৈ উঠিছিল সি আৰু সেই জুইৰ উত্তাপেৰেই বৰদোৱানীৰ লোহাৰৰ পোছক স্নেহময় আঙুলি কিছুমানে এপদ এপদকৈ আঁতৰাই পেলালে। আজি যেন আকৌ সংসাৰৰ পাতনি মেলিছে দুয়ো। ছয়-সাত বছৰৰ আগলৈ উভতি গৈছে। তাইৰ আশে-পাশে মৌমাখি হৈ গুণগুণোৱা সৌ তাহানিৰ যুৱক হোৱাৰ উপক্ৰম ঘটিছে আজি পুণ্যধৰৰ মাজত।”

(পৃষ্ঠা-৪৭)

‘দ্বিতীয়া’ৰ গদ্যশৈলী অত্যন্ত সৰল আৰু পোনপটীয়া। বক্তব্য বিষয়টি কোনোধৰণৰ আঁৰ-বেৰ নোহোৱাকৈ অতি সৰল আৰু শুৱলা ভাষাত ব্যক্ত কৰিছে এনেদৰে -

“এগৰাকী নাৰীৰ জীৱনৰ আটাইতকৈ আকাংক্ষিত বস্তুটো কি ? তেওঁৰ প্ৰেমিকৰ অথবা তেওঁৰ স্বামীৰ অকৃত্ৰিম ভালপোৱা। তেওঁৰ পৰা এইখিনি অকৃত্ৰিমভাৱে পাবৰ বাবেই মই বাউলী হৈছো। ধন-সোণ, মণি-মুকুতাই মোক শাস্তি দিব পৰা নাই, মোৰ হাহাকাৰ দুগুণে বঢ়াইছে। বাবে বাবে মোৰ ভাব হয়, মোৰ কি নাই, সকলো আছে। অথচ মই জানো, মোৰ একো নাই।: (পৃষ্ঠা-৮১)

বৰ্তমান নাৰী সমস্যাকেন্দ্ৰিক উপন্যাস ‘জিন্নৎ’ত কাব্যিক বৰ্ণনা, চিত্ৰকল্প আৰু অলংকাৰৰ সুপ্ৰয়োগ ঘটিছে। মাজে মাজে দীঘলীয়া বাক্য গাঁথনিয়ো যেন সৌন্দৰ্য্য বঢ়াইছে-

“বিশাল সৰীসৃপৰ শীতল দেহাই আলিঙ্গন কৰিছে তাইক - ভয় নালাগে, বৰং অনিৰ্বচনীয় এক পুলকত অৱশ হৈ পৰে ৰৌচন.. বুকুত নিভতে বিবৰ্ণ হৈ উঠা ঈশ্বাৰ পৃথিৱীত বামধেনুৰ পৰশ পৰে... শীতল আলিঙ্গনৰ সুখানুভূতিত আচ্ছন্ন হৈ পৰাৰ ক্ষণতে হঠাৎ তাই আৱিষ্কাৰ কৰা বিলখনৰ পিতনিসদৃশ অঠাইত জাহ যাব খুজিছে মকবুল... প্ৰাণপণে চেষ্টা কৰিছে নিজক তুলি ধৰিবলৈ... তাই দৌৰি গৈ তাৰ বাবে দুহাত আগবঢ়াই দিব খুজিলে, অথচ শীতল আলিঙ্গনৰ পৰা হাজাৰ চেষ্টাতো নিজকে মুক্ত কৰিব পৰা নাই... চকুৰ আগতে ডিঙিলৈকে জাহ গ’ল মকবুল .... আস্, সেয়া তাইৰ চকুৰ আগতে পিতনিত নোহোৱা হৈ পৰিল, তাইৰ প্ৰিয়তম পুৰুষ হৃদয় বিচৰা কান্দোনত ভাগি পৰিল তাই নাঃ নাঃ এনেদৰে হেৰাই যাব নোৱাৰে তেওঁ....। (পৃষ্ঠা-১২০-১২১)

**নাৰী মনস্তত্ত্ব :**

আটাইকেউখন উপন্যাসৰ চকুত পৰা বৈশিষ্ট্যটো হ’ল - নাৰীৰ মনস্তত্ত্বৰ প্ৰতিফলন। তাৰ উপৰি কৰুণ ৰসেৰে সিক্ত আটাইকেইখন উপন্যাস।

“এটা সময়ত কণচাৰীৰ ওচৰত বহিল সাধু কুমাৰ। কোনো কথা নোকোৱাকৈ কণচাৰীৰ হাত এখন দুহাতেৰে

তুলি ল'লে।

কণ্ঠচাৰীয়ে সাধুকুমাৰৰ চকুলৈ চালে- ‘

‘শপত ভাঙি ঘৰৰ ভিতৰলৈ কিয় আহিল গোভা  
ৰজা?’

‘নাহিলে জানো হ’লহেঁতেন ৰাণীদেউ?’

‘নহ’লহেঁতেন- নহ’লহেঁতেন- গোভা ৰজা।  
নহ’লহেঁতেন।’ সাধুকুমাৰৰ হাতত মূৰ থৈ সহস্ৰ দিনৰ মূৰত  
নিঃশব্দ কান্দোনত ভাগি পৰিল কণ্ঠচাৰী।”

(দেওলাংখুই, পৃষ্ঠা-৪১৪)

‘বৰদোৱানীয়ে বুকুৰ মাজত বহন কৰি থকা  
বিষাদবোধটোৱে এদিন সাৰ পালে।

“মৰি মৰি জীয়াই আছোঁ মই আপোনাৰ পৰা  
আঁতৰি ....। মৰি মৰি জী আছোঁ।”

(পৃষ্ঠা-১২০)

‘দ্বিতীয়া’ উপন্যাসতো নাৰী মনঃতত্ত্ব বা কাৰুণ্য  
অতি সুন্দৰভাৱে প্ৰকাশিত হৈছে-

“আজি মাহীয়ে বিচৰাত মই আচল উত্তৰটোকে  
দিলো; মই কোনো ডেকাক মোৰ অন্তৰ সমৰ্পন কৰা নাই।  
কিন্তু মোৰ অন্তৰখনে ভিতৰি ভিতৰি কান্দি উঠিল। এৰা, মই  
ইয়াৰ ওলোটা উত্তৰটো দিবলৈহে ভাল পালোহেঁতেন। আনকি  
কোনোবা ডেকাৰ নাম শুনি আই আৰু পিতাই যদি খঙত  
জ্বলি পকিও উঠিলেহেঁতেন, তথাপি মোৰ বেয়া  
নালাগিলহেঁতেন।

- তোক সাউদলৈ দিবলৈ ঠিক কৰিছে আইজনী।

- কোনে ঠিক কৰিছে? কোন সাউদ? একে উশাহে  
মই সুধি পেলালো।

- সেই আমাৰ ভাগ্যেশ্বৰৰ জীয়েক-জেউতিক দিয়া  
সাউদে।।

- এইবোৰ কি শুনিছো আই? কি কৰিলি? মোক  
সাউদলৈ কিয় ঠিক কৰিছ? ইমান দূৰলৈ? তাকো আগেয়ে  
এজনী নিয়া মানুহটোলৈ?”

(পৃষ্ঠা-৫-৯)

এগৰাকী নিৰ্যাতিতা নাৰীৰ কৰুণ আৰ্তনাদৰ  
প্ৰতিচ্ছবি ‘জিন্নৎ’ উপন্যাসৰ পাতে পাতে সিঁচৰতি হৈ আছে।  
তাৰে এখনি সজল ছবি-

“মাজনিশা তাইক কোঠাৰ পৰা গতিয়াই বাহিৰ  
কৰি দিলে সি। শাস্তি। গিৰিয়েকৰ ক্ষুধা নিবাৰণত যৈণীয়েকে  
কৰা আপত্তিৰ শাস্তি। তাৰ দেহৰ জুই নুমুৰাব নোৱাৰিলে।  
তাইৰ কাম কি? প্ৰয়োজন কিহৰ?

... জীচানৰ কান্দোন আৰু তাইৰ আকৃতি, একোৱেই  
টলাব নোৱাৰে আনোৱাৰৰ পাৰাণ হৃদয়ক। খোল নাখায়  
দুৱাৰ। গুচি যাব নেকি তাই ক’বলৈ?”

(পৃষ্ঠা-৮৩)

**উপসংহাৰ :**

সাম্প্ৰতিক অসমীয়া উপন্যাসৰ আলোচনা  
প্ৰসংগত দেখা যায় যে সকলো শ্ৰেণীৰ উপন্যাসতেই অতি  
মুক্তভাৱে বৰ্তমানৰ সমস্যাৰাজিক আশ্ৰয় কৰি ঘটনা  
আগবাঢ়ে। নাৰীৰ মনতত্ত্বক অধিক গুৰুত্ব দি উপস্থাপন কৰা  
উপন্যাসসমূহে বৰ্তমান যথেষ্ট জনপ্ৰিয়তা অৰ্জন কৰিব পাৰিছে  
বুলি ক’ব পাৰি। গৱেষণাধৰ্মী উপন্যাসমূহেও পাঠকক বহুতো  
নতুন নতুন তথ্যৰ যোগান ধৰিছে। ইতিহাসৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ  
পুনৰিন্যাসৰ যোগেদি যি নতুন ৰীতিৰ সম্পৰীক্ষা আৰম্ভ  
হৈছে তাৰ এক উল্লেখযোগ্য নিদৰ্শন ‘দেওলাংখুই’।  
উপন্যাসসমূহত কাহিনীৰ মাজে মাজে প্ৰেমৰ বৰ্ণিতা ৰূপ  
পৰিষ্টি হৈছে। দুই চাৰিখনক বাদ দি প্ৰায় সকলো শ্ৰেণীৰ  
উপন্যাসে এটা ইতিবাচক ধাৰণাৰে আশাপ্ৰদ সামৰণি  
ঘটাইছে বুলি একে আধাৰে ক’ব পাৰি।

**মূখ্য তথ্য :**

১) ৰীতা চৌধুৰী- দেও লাংখুই

২) মণিকুন্তলা ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য- বৰদোৱানী দ্বিতীয় প্ৰকাশ, ২০০৭,  
নৱেম্বৰ।

৩) ৰত্না দত্ত- দ্বিতীয়া, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ২০০২ নৱেম্বৰ।

৪) টুনা গৌতম - জিন্নৎ প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ২০০৬ ডিচেম্বৰ।

## জোন আৰু চিকুণীৰ কবিতা

ৰাজীৱ দত্ত

দিখৌমুখ জনজাতি উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক বিদ্যালয়, গৌৰীসাগৰ, শিৱসাগৰ, অসম

(ক)

আমেৰিকান মহাকাশচাৰী নীল আমষ্ট্ৰঙে ১৯৬৯ চনৰ ২০ জুলাইত চন্দ্ৰৰ শিলাময় বুকুত প্ৰথম পদাৰ্পণ কৰি “মোৰ এই সৰু খোজটো মানৱ জাতিৰ কাৰণে এক বিৰাট সাফল্য” বুলি কোৱাৰ বিয়াল্লিশটা বছৰৰ পাছত অৰ্থাৎ ২০১১ চনৰ ১১ মাৰ্চত পৃথিৱীৰ সৰ্বাধিক ভূ-কম্পনপ্ৰৱণ দেশ জাপানত সংঘটিত এটা বিধ্বংসী ছুনামীৰ বাবে জ্যোতিষ শাস্ত্ৰই জগৰীয়া কৰিছিল জোনবাইক। সেই ভয়ংকৰ ছুনামী সংঘটিত হোৱাৰ দুদিন পূৰ্বে (৯ মাৰ্চত) Richard Nolle নামৰ এজন জ্যোতিষীয়ে সুখ্যাত এবিচি ৰেডিঅ’ৰ এক আলোচনাত এই দাবী কৰিছিল যে ২০১১ চনৰ ১৯ মাৰ্চত চন্দ্ৰ পৃথিৱীৰ আটাইতকৈ বেছি কাষ অহাৰ ফলত পৃথিৱী-চন্দ্ৰৰ মাজৰ দূৰত্ব হ’ব মাত্ৰ ২২,১৫৬৭ মাইল আৰু পৃথিৱীৰ নিচেই কাষ চাপি অহা চন্দ্ৰৰ মধ্যাকৰ্ষণ শক্তিয়ে জাপানত ভয়ংকৰ ছুনামী-প্ৰাকৃতিক ধ্বংসলীলাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিব। অৱশ্যে, জ্যোতিষীগৰাকীৰ ভৱিষ্যৎ বাণীৰ এসপ্তাহ পূৰ্বেই - ২০১১ চনৰ ১১ মাৰ্চত- জাপানত সেই ভয়ংকৰ ছুনামীৰ সংঘটিত হৈছিল। আনহাতে, জাপানত সংঘটিত ছটা অতি বিধ্বংসী ছুনামীৰ এটা হিচাবে পৰিগণিত হোৱা সেই ছুনামীটো সংঘটিত হোৱাৰ দিনাই ইংলণ্ডৰ সম্ভ্ৰান্তবাতৰি কাকত “ডেইলী মেইল”-ত উল্লিখিত জ্যোতিষীগৰাকীৰ উদ্ধৃতি দি “Was the sixth biggest earthquake ever recorded caused by the ‘supermoon’”? শীৰ্ষক এখন প্ৰতিবেদন প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল।

ইংলণ্ডৰ “ডেইলী মেইল”-ত উল্লিখিত প্ৰতিবেদন প্ৰকাশ পোৱাৰ পাছতে উক্ত জ্যোতিষীগৰাকীৰ ভবিষ্যৎবাণীৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰি ইণ্টাৰনেটৰ বিজ্ঞানমনস্ক ব্লগসমূহ ভৰি পৰিছিল। আমেৰিকান জ্যোতিষ বিজ্ঞানী ফিল প্লাটে নিজা ব্লগত ইংলণ্ডৰ বাতৰি কাকত “ডেইলী মেইল”-ৰ উক্ত প্ৰতিবেদনক “অতি লজ্জাজনক” আৰু চন্দ্ৰৰ মধ্যাকৰ্ষণ শক্তিয়ে পৃথিৱীত ভূমিকম্প ঘটাই বুলি কাকতখনে “বহু মূল্যবান ঠাই অনাহকত ব্যয় কৰি সাধাৰণ জনতাৰ মনত ভয় আৰু ভ্ৰাসৰ সৃষ্টি” কৰা বুলি অভিহিত কৰিছিল।

(খ)

নীলীম আকাশৰ জোনে পৃথিৱীৰ সাগৰ-মহাসাগৰৰ বুকুত জোৱাৰ-ভাঁটাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰাৰ প্ৰাচীন বিশ্বাসৰ সামান্ত্ৰালভাৱে জোনবাই আৰু মানৱ-মনৰ অপাৰ-বহস্যসয় সম্পৰ্কইও বৈদিক যুগৰ পৰাই চৰ্চা লাভ কৰি আহিছে। হিন্দু পুৰাণত বৰ্ণিত এক কাহিনী অনুসৰি দেৱতা-অসুৰৰ যুগপৎ সমুদ্ৰ-মস্থনত লক্ষ্মীদেৱী, হলাহল বিহ, অমৃতৰ লগতে জোনবাইৰ আৰ্বিভাৱ হৈছিল। গতিকে, হিন্দু পুৰাণ অনুসৰি জোন সমুদ্ৰ-গৰ্ভজাত। জোন পূৰ্বাকাশত উদয় হোৱাৰ লগে লগে সমুদ্ৰই আপোন গৰ্ভজাতক চাবলৈ পূবলৈ ঢাপলি মেলে আৰু পশ্চিমাকাশত অস্ত যোৱাৰ লগে লগে সমুদ্ৰও ঢাপলি মেলে পশ্চিমাকাশলৈ। এয়া, পুৰাণকল্পিত সাগৰীয় জোৱাৰ-ভাঁটা আৰু জোনৰ সম্পৰ্কৰ ব্যাখ্যা। সমুদ্ৰ-গৰ্ভজাত জোনবাইক দেৱাদেৱতাৰ শিৱই অলংকাৰ হিচাবে কপালত ধাৰণ কৰিছিল বাবে শিৱৰ আন এটা নাম চন্দ্ৰকাৰেশ্বৰ। কেৱল হিন্দু ধৰ্ম-দৰ্শনতেই নহয়, ইছলাম আৰু খৃষ্টান ধৰ্মৰ দুই পবিত্ৰ তিথি ক্ৰমে বমজান আৰু ইষ্টাৰৰ লগতো ক্ৰমে তৰাখচিত কাঁচি জোন আৰু অকলশৰীয়া কাঁচি জোনৰ অভিন্ন সম্পৰ্ক আছে।

প্ৰাচীন সাহিত্যৰ পৰা আধুনিক আৰু উত্তৰ আধুনিক বিশ্ব-সাহিত্যতো এক চিৰ শক্তিমান, পৱিত্ৰ মন্ত্ৰসদৃশ উপস্থিতিৰে সমুজ্জ্বল হৈ আছে জোনবাই আৰু জোনবাইৰ সৈতে চিৰন্তন মানুহৰ মনোজগতৰ অপাৰ-বহস্যময় সম্পৰ্ক। হিন্দু পুৰাণৰ চন্দ্ৰ-দেৱতা বৈদিক জ্যোতিষ শাস্ত্ৰত হৈ পৰিছে মন-মগজু, আবেগ, ইন্দ্ৰিয়পৰায়ণতাৰ প্ৰতীক। খৃষ্ট পূৰ্ব ছয়-চাৰি শতিকাত ৰচিত তথা সূৰ্য, চন্দ্ৰ, বায়ু আৰু অগ্নিৰ বাসস্থানৰ বিশদ বৰ্ণনা থকা ঐত্ৰ্যীয় উপনিষদৰ মতে, অগ্নি শব্দ হৈ মানুহৰ মুখ-গহুৰত, বায়ু নিশ্বাস হৈ নাসিকা-গহুৰত, সূৰ্য দৃষ্টি হৈ চকুত আৰু চন্দ্ৰ বা জোনবাই মন হৈ মানুহৰ অন্তৰত প্ৰবেশ কৰে। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় ঋষিকবি-দাৰ্শনিকসকলৰ চিন্তন-মননতেই মানৱ-ইতিহাসত প্ৰথমবাৰৰ বাবে, সৰ্বকালৰ সকলো মানুহৰ সমস্বৰ ধৰ্মনি একত্ৰিত হৈ, এনেকৈয়ে জোন আৰু মানুহৰ মনোজগতৰ সম্পৰ্ক, আকৰ্ষণ আৰু বিকৰ্ষণ মন্ত্ৰসদৃশ ধৰ্মনিৰে উচ্চাৰিত হৈছিল। পৰবৰ্তী যুগৰ টেলিস্কোপ আবিষ্কাৰ, মহাকাশ

যান আৰু নীল আমন্ত্ৰণ বাহিনীৰ জোনৰ বুকুত পদাৰ্পণেও স্নান কৰিব পৰা নাই জোনবাই আৰু মানুহৰ মনোজগতৰ সেই চিৰন্তন আৰু চিৰ বহস্যময় সম্পৰ্কক। ভাৰতীয় বৈদিক সাহিত্যৰ কেইবা হাজাৰ বছৰৰ পৰবৰ্তী যুগৰ আধুনিক বিশ্ব সাহিত্যত ছিল্ভিয়া প্লাথেও বিষন্ন বদনে ঘোষণা কৰিছে জোনবাই আৰু মানৱ-মনৰ আশ্চৰ্যকৰ সম্পৰ্কৰ কথা :

“...This is the light of the mind, cold and planetary

The trees of the mind are black. The light is blue.....”

আমাৰ পৃথিবীৰ সবাটোতকৈ ওচৰত মহাকাশৰ বুকুত ওপঙি থকা জোনবাইক তৰা এটা নুসুজিলে যেন স্বয়ংসম্পূৰ্ণ নহয় আমাৰ কোনো মৌখিক লোক-সাহিত্য। জোনবাইৰ শিলাময় বুকুৰ ব্যঞ্জনাৰ অবিহনে যেন অসম্পূৰ্ণ হৈ ৰয় কোনোবা উত্তৰ আধুনিকতাবাদী কবিতা। ভাৰতীয় প্ৰান্তীয় ভাষাৰ মৌখিক নিচুকণী গীতৰ পৰা প্ৰেম-কাহিনীলৈকে সকলোতে চান্দ্রমামাৰ উল্লেখ আছে। প্ৰাচীন কবিবৃন্দই সুন্দৰী তিৰোতাৰ মুখ মণ্ডলক প্ৰায়ে সৌন্দৰ্যৰ প্ৰতীক জোনবাইৰ লগত তুলনা কৰি আহিছে। সেয়ে চান্দ্রমুখী। প্ৰাচীন গ্ৰীক-ৰোমান সাহিত্যত উল্লেখ থকা গ্ৰীক-পুৰাণৰ চন্দ্ৰাদেৱী চিষ্টিয়া আৰু চিষ্টিয়াৰ মৰ্ত্যৰ প্ৰেমিক এণ্ডিমিয়নৰ প্ৰেম-কাহিনীৰ আধাৰত ইংৰাজ কবি জন কীট্ছ-এ “এণ্ডিমিয়ন” নামৰ এক সুখ্যাত আৰু সুদীৰ্ঘ কবিতা ৰচনা কৰিছিল। স্পেইনৰ বিশ্বখ্যাত আধুনিক কবি-নাট্যকাৰ ফ্লেডৰিক গাৰ্চিয়া লকাইও চন্দ্ৰাদেৱীয়ে পলুৱাই নিয়া মৰ্ত্যৰ প্ৰেমিকৰ প্ৰাচীন-গাঁথা আৰু স্থানীয় Andalusia দেশীয় লোক-কথাক ভিত্তি কৰি জোনবাইৰ কাহিনী-গীত লিখিছে। আনহাতে, একালৰ অসমীয়াৰ গৰ্ব, অহংকাৰ আৰু আভিজাত্যৰ প্ৰতীক হাতী কিনিবৰ বাবে গোটোৱা পইচা থবলৈ মোনা চিলাবৰ বাবে, লোক-সাহিত্যৰ ভাষাৰে, বেজি এটি বিচৰা সেই জোনবাইৰ শিলাময় বুকুত নীল আমন্ত্ৰণ বাহিনীয়ে পদাৰ্পন কৰি জোনবাইৰ কাব্যিক মায়াময়তা নষ্ট কৰাৰ বাবে সুখী হ’ব পৰা নাছিল আধুনিক ইংৰাজ কবি ডব্লিউ.এইছ. অ’ডেন। সুখ্যাত “মুন লেণ্ডিং” নামৰ কবিতাটোত অ’ডেনে এপ’ল’ বাহিনীক হোমাৰৰ মহাকাব্যিক বীৰৰ লগত তুলনা কৰিও সেই চন্দ্ৰ-অভিযানক, প্ৰায় বিজ্ঞান-বিদ্বেষী ইংৰাজ ৰমন্যাসিক কবিবৃন্দৰ দৰে, যুগান্তকাৰী বুলি ভাবিব পৰা নাই। বৰং উক্ত চন্দ্ৰ-অভিযানক “so huge a phallic triumph” বুলি অভিহিত কৰি অ’ডেনে ভগবানক ধন্যবাদ যাঁচিছে এনেদৰে :

“...Unsmudged, thank God, my moon still queens the Heavens

As She ebbs and fulls, a Presence to glop at...”

ইংৰাজ কবি-নাট্যকাৰ শ্যেক্সপীয়েৰৰ মতে জোনবাই পৃথিবীৰ কাষ চাপি মানুহক অস্থিৰ আৰু উন্মাদ কৰি তোলাটো সঁচা। এখন ৰুমালৰ বাবে সন্দেহবশতঃ প্ৰণয়িনী পত্নী ডেছডিমনাক আপোন শোৱা-পাটিত ডিঙি চেপি হত্যা কৰাৰ পাছতে, ঘটনাক্ৰমে, কোঠালৈ সোমাই অহা লিগিৰী এমিলিয়াক শ্যেক্সপীয়েৰৰ ট্ৰেজিক নায়ক অথেল’-ই নিৰুদ্বেগচিত্তে কৈছে যে এয়া জোনৰ ভুল, জোনবাইজনী কেতিয়াবা প্ৰয়োজনতকৈ পৃথিবীৰ বেছি কাষ চাপে আৰু পৃথিবীৰ মানুহক উন্মাদ কৰে :

“It is the very error of the moon,

She comes nearer earth than she was wont /And makes men mad.”

বিশ্ব-সাহিত্যৰ আকাশৰ জোনবাই কেতিয়াবা অতি চঞ্চলা তৰুণী, কেতিয়াবা অনাঘ্ৰাতা কুমাৰী, কেতিয়াবা জুইত সঁকা ৰুটি, কেতিয়াবা অমংগলৰ কুহঁকিনী, কেতিয়াবা অপ্ৰতিৰোধী যৌন-আবেগৰ বাৰ্তাবাহী আৰু কেতিয়াবা স্বৰ্গীয় দয়া-ক্ষমা-প্ৰেমৰ অপৰিময় প্ৰতীক হিচাবে চিহ্নিত হৈ আহিছে। প্ৰাচীন ভাৰতীয় ৰজা-মহাৰজাই জোনাকত মৃগয়াৰত অৱস্থাত সুন্দৰী নাৰী-সংগ লাভ কৰাৰ দৰে শ্যেক্সপীয়েৰৰ নাটকৰ অধিকাংশ প্ৰেমিক-প্ৰেমিকাৰ জোনাক অতি প্ৰিয়। জোনাকৰ পটভূমিত ৰচিত শ্যেক্সপীয়েৰৰ “এ মীড্‌ছামাৰ নাইট্‌ছ ড্ৰীম”-ত পৰীৰ ৰাণী টিটানিয়াই জোনবাইক, আধুনিক কালৰ জ্যোতিষীৰ দৰে, বতৰৰ যতসব অশান্তিৰ কাৰণ হিচাবে অভিহিত কৰিছে। শ্যেক্সপীয়েৰৰ অমৰ প্ৰেম-গাঁথা “ৰোমিঅ’ এণ্ড জুলিয়েট”-ত জুলিয়েটে প্ৰেমৰ কাৰণে প্ৰেমিক ৰোমিঅ’ক চিৰচঞ্চলা জোনৰ নামত শপত নাখাবলৈ অনুৰোধ কৰিছে :

“O, swear not by the moon, th’ inconstant moon,

That monthly changes in her circle orb,

Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.”

ইংৰাজ ৰমন্যাসিক কবি এছ. টি. ক’লৰিজে “ডিজেকশ্বন : এন অ’ড” নামৰ সুবিখ্যাত প্ৰশস্তি কবিতাটোৰ আৰম্ভণিতে ছাৰ পেট্ৰিক স্পেঞ্চৰ বেলাডৰ এটি কলি আমডালি হিচাবে আঁৰি দিছে, য’ত বেলাডৰ কবিয়ে জোনবাইক ভয়ানক ধুমুহা-বৰষুণৰ বাৰ্তাবাহক বুলি অভিহিত কৰিছে। ক’লৰিজে নিজেও কবিতাটোও আৰম্ভ কৰিছে এনেদৰে : যদি বেলাডৰ কবি ছাৰ পেট্ৰিক স্পেঞ্চৰ বতৰ-গণণা সঁচা, তেন্তে ময়ো

দেখিছো আকস্মিক ভয়ংকৰ ধুমুহা-ঘূৰ্ণীৰ বাতৰ্ভহনকাৰী পুৰণা  
জোনজনী আৰু দেখিছো গৰ্জনমুখৰ ধুমুহা বাতিৰ দুৰ্নিবাৰ  
গতিত বৈ অহা ধাৰাসাৰ বৃষ্টিৰ প্লাৱন :

“Well ! If the Bard was weather-  
wise, who made

The grand old ballad of Sir Patrick  
Spence.....

I see the old Moon in her lap, fore-  
telling

The coming-on of rain and squally  
blast....”

অৱশ্যে ক’লৰিজৰ “ডিজেকশ্বন : এন অ’ড”-ৰ  
প্ৰথম স্তৰকতে প্ৰতিজন পাঠক নিশ্চিত হয় যে কানীয়া কবি  
ক’লৰিজে শূন্য ধুমুহা-গাজনিৰ শব্দ বাহিৰৰ পৃথিৱীৰ নহয়,  
সেই ধুমুহা-গাজনিৰ শব্দ কবি ক’লৰিজৰ নিজৰ তীব্ৰ  
আকাংক্ষিত বুকুৰ ভিতৰৰ শব্দ। ব্যৰ্থ প্ৰেম আৰু অবিৰাম  
কানি সেৱনৰ ফলত এক ভগ্ন মন আৰু স্বাস্থ্যৰে এক কাতৰ-  
কোণ্ডা অৱস্থাত কবি ক’লৰিজে অনবৰতে অনুভৱ কৰিছিল  
সৃষ্টিৰ দুৰ্নিবাৰ তাড়না। সেই সৃষ্টি-তাড়নাৰ ধুমুহা-গাজনিকে  
যেন গতিশীল কৰি তুলিছিল ক’লৰিজে দেখা  
জোনবাইজনীয়ে। সেয়ে, ক’লৰিজৰ বাবে জোনবাই হৈ পৰিছে  
সৃষ্টিশীলতাৰ দুৰ্জ্যে প্ৰতীক :

“Those sounds which often have  
raised me, whilst they awed,

And sent my soul abroad,

Might now perhaps their wanted  
impulse give,

Might startle this dull pain, and make  
it move and live !”

অসমীয়া কবিতাৰ আকাশৰ জোনবাইৰ লগত  
আধুনিক মানুহৰ মনোজগতৰ সম্পৰ্ক অতি নিবিড়, চিৰ  
বহস্যময় আৰু বহুমাত্ৰিক।

কবি হেম বৰুৱাৰ “মমতাৰ চিঠি”-ত মমতা ন-  
কৈ ঘৰলৈ আহিবৰ দিনা আকাশৰ মেঘৰ মোহনাত জোনবাইয়ে  
নাও হৈ দুয়োকে ৰিঙিয়াই মতাৰ কথা আছে। মমতাই কোৱাৰ  
দৰে, “তেওঁ” কিয় তেনেকৈ ব’লাগি চাইছিল মমতাৰ দেহৰ  
ৰঙা ৰিহাখনলৈ? জোনবাইয়ে দুয়োকে তৰাৰ দেশলৈ জনোৱা  
নিনাও আহুন শুনি নেকি, সেই কথাৰ উত্তৰ আমাৰ হাতত  
নাই। কিন্তু কবিতাটোত মমতাই নিজকে “তল-সৰা এপাহ  
শেৱালি” আৰু “তেওঁ”-ক “কোনোবা দূৰ বিদেশৰ স্বপ্নাতুৰ  
আলোকৰ মানুহ”-ৰ লগত বিজোৱাৰ কথা উল্লেখ আছে।  
তৰাৰ দেশলৈ ৰিঙিয়াই মতা জোনবাইয়ে “তল-সৰা এপাহ

শেৱালি”-সদৃশ মমতা আৰু “কোনোবা দূৰ বিদেশৰ স্বপ্নাতুৰ  
আলোকৰ মানুহ”- সদৃশ “তেওঁ”-ৰ মাজত চিৰ  
অপ্ৰাপ্যনীয়তাৰ এক বিষাদমধুৰ মত্ততা জগাই তোলাৰ ৰিগি  
ৰিগি বিষাদৰ সুৰ এটা গোটেই “মমতাৰ চিঠি”-খনত বিয়পি  
আছে। জোনে ওপচাই পেলোৱা দুখ আৰু বিষাদেৰে ভৰা  
কবিতাটোত জোনে, প্ৰাচীন পুৰাণকল্পিত জোঁৱাৰ-ভাটাৰ দৰে,  
মনৰ সাগৰত টৌ তোলাৰ কথাও আছে :

“...সেই দিনা মন-সাগৰত মোৰ এৰি অহা আৰু /  
আহি পোৱা অলেখ টৌউৰ কঁপনি জাগিছিল...” (মমতাৰ  
চিঠি : হেম বৰুৱা)

সকলো পৰম্পৰাগত বমন্যাসিক উপমা-চিত্ৰকল্পৰ  
পৰা আঁতৰি আহি জোনবাইৰ এক নব্য বৈপ্লৱিক চিত্ৰকল্পই  
ভুমুকি মাৰিছিল কুৰি শতিকাৰ প্ৰথমার্ধৰ ভাৰতীয় প্ৰান্তীয়  
সাহিত্যত। পাঞ্জাবী কবি অমৃত প্ৰীতম (১৯১৯-২০০৫)-  
এ প্ৰতিপদৰ পৰা পূৰ্ণিমালৈকে একলা দুকলাকৈ বাঢ়ি অহা  
জোনবাইক তুলনা কৰিছে আকাশৰ চকু মদাক্ৰান্ত কৰি তুলি  
লাহে লাহে ভৰপূৰ হৈ অহা মদিৰা পাত্ৰৰ লগত : “....Who

has brought the crescent wine jar of the moon  
/ The eyes of the sky are heavy with drink ?

”(মূল পাঞ্জাবীৰ পৰা ইংৰাজীলৈ অনুবাদ Arlene Zide -  
ৰ : Sometimes I Tell This Story To The  
River)। আধুনিক বাঙালী কবিতাৰ জগতত কবিগুৰু ৰবী  
ঠাকুৰ আৰু নজৰুল ইছলামৰ প্ৰায় সমানেই নাম উচ্চাৰিত  
হোৱা আন এটা নাম হ’ল কবি সুকান্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্য। বৈপ্লৱিক  
সমাজবাদ, স্বদেশপ্ৰেম, বমন্যাসিকতা আৰু গভীৰ  
মানৱতাবোধেৰে অনুপ্ৰাণিত বংগৰ বিপ্লৱী কবি সুকান্ত  
ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ জীৱন-কাব্য দৰ্শনৰ প্ৰভাৱ বংগৰ আন দুগৰাকী  
স্বনামধন্য কবি-সংগীতজ্ঞ ক্ৰমে সুভাষ মুখোপাধ্যায় আৰু  
সলিল চৌধুৰীৰ জীৱন-কৰ্মৰ ওপৰত অপৰিসীম। মাত্ৰ একৈশ

বছৰ বয়সত (১৯২৬-৪৭) ইহলীলা সম্বৰণ কৰা বিদ্রোহী  
কবি সুকান্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্যৰ জীৱন-কালত অধিকাংশ কবিতা-নাটক  
প্ৰকাশ পাইছিল কেৱল কাকত-আলোচনীত : কবি সুকান্তৰ  
জীৱন কালত প্ৰকাশ পোৱা “ছাড়পত্ৰ” শীৰ্ষক কাব্য গ্ৰন্থখনৰ  
“হে মহাজীৱন” নামৰ কবিতাটোত কবিয়ে “কবিতা”-ক ছুটি  
দিছে আৰু অংকন কৰিছে আক্ষৰিক অৰ্থতেই জোনৰ এখন  
অপৰম্পৰাগত বৈপ্লৱিক চিত্ৰকল্প : “প্ৰয়োজন নাই কবিতাৰ  
স্বিক্ততা / কবিতা, তোমাক আজি দিছে ছুটি / ক্ষুধাৰ ৰাজ্যত  
পৃথিৱী গদ্যময় / পূৰ্ণিমাৰ জোন যেন জুইত সেকা ৰুটি।”

প্ৰায় একেখিনি সময় অৰ্থাৎ কুৰি শতিকাৰ ছল্লিশৰ  
দশকতে কবি সুকান্ততকৈও নিৰ্মম ক্ষমাহীনভাৱে জোনবাইৰ  
এখন অতি মৰ্মস্কক ভয়ংকৰ ছবি আঁকিছে “হে অৰণ্য, হে  
মহানগৰ” শীৰ্ষক কাব্য গ্ৰন্থৰে অসমীয়া কবিতাৰ জগতত

আধুনিক যুগৰ সূচনা কৰা কবি নৱকান্ত বৰুৱাই। নৱকান্ত বৰুৱাৰ “সন্ধ্যাৰ ৰেপচ’দি” নামৰ কবিতাটোত কবৰৰ পৰা উঠি অহা সেই জোনৰ ওঁঠত জিলিকে মিছৰৰ ফ্ৰিংক্সৰ কুটিল চিৰ বহস্যময় বেকা হাঁহি :

“... মৰা জোন উঠি আহে কবৰৰ পৰা /....জোনে কয় হাঁহে বেকা হাঁহি। /ছবিৰ পাতত দেখা মিছৰৰ ফ্ৰিংক্সৰ হাঁহি। / মৰা জোন উঠি আহে, আধা জোন/ শিং লগা বেকা এটি জোন.....” (সন্ধ্যাৰ ৰেপচ’দি : নৱকান্ত বৰুৱা)

আনহাতে, পঞ্চাশৰ দশকত উপনীত হৈ কবি নৱকান্তই দেখিছে দুবৰি বনত মুকুতাৰ মণি আৰু প্ৰেয়সীৰ চুলিৰ মেঘত লাহী আঙুলিৰ বহুতো জোন। আধুনিক মানুহৰ বৈশিষ্ট্যপূৰ্ণ মানসিক দন্দৰে ৰোমাণ্টিক তন্ময়ভাৱে অৱস্থাত প্ৰেমাৰ্পদৰ চুলিৰ মেঘত লাহী আঙুলিৰ জোনৰ অনুভৱ কৰাটো আমাৰ চিনাকি পৰম্পৰাগত ছবি। প্ৰেমিক কবি নৱকান্ত আৰু অৰুন্ধতীৰ প্ৰেমাকাশতো এদিন জোনবাইৰ আৰ্হিভাৱ হৈছে। আধুনিক জ্যোতিষী অথবা বতৰ-বিজ্ঞানী শ্যেৰুপীয়েৰৰ দৰেই আধুনিক কবি নৱকান্ত বৰুৱাৰ কবিতাতো আকাশৰ জোনে মানুহৰ বুকুৰ সাগৰত অথবা সমাজত জোৱাৰ তোলা বিশ্বাসৰ ইংগিত আছে। কবিৰ প্ৰেমাকাশত জোনৰ আৰ্হিভাৱ হৈছিল যদিও প্ৰেমৰ জোঁৱাৰ তুলিবলৈ এখন সাগৰ নাছিল কবি আৰু অৰুন্ধতীৰ :

“মনত পৰেনে অৰুন্ধতী/দুবৰি বনত মুকুতাৰ মণি/ চুলিৰ মেঘত লাহী আঙুলিৰ বহুতো জোন,  
(জোৱাৰৰ বাবে সাগৰ নাছিলঙ্গ) “  
(মনত পৰেনে অৰুন্ধতী : নৱকান্ত বৰুৱা)

আন এগৰাকী আধুনিক অসমীয়া কবি নীলিম কুমাৰৰ মতে “...এই আকাশৰ তলত/বহু কবিয়ে জোনৰ বাবে গান গালে /বহু কবিৰ হাতত ঠেৰেঙা লাগি মৰিল বহু জোন/ বহু কবিয়ে নাৰীৰ চুলিত মেলি দিলে হেজাৰ হেজাৰ জোন/ যিবোৰ আৰু ঘূৰি নাহিল...”। সাম্প্ৰতিক সময়ৰ প্ৰভাৱশালী কবিগৰাকীয়ে এতিয়া আকাশত থকা মাত্ৰ চাৰিজনী জোনক কবিসকলৰ হাতৰ পৰা বচাব খোজে— “শিশুবোৰৰ কাৰণে”। আধুনিক কবিবৃন্দই নিজা কাব্যজগতত জোনৰ মাত্ৰাধিক ব্যৱহাৰেৰে শিশুৰ জোন কাঢ়ি নিয়া বাবে বোধহয় সুখী হ’ব পৰা নাই কবি নীলিম কুমাৰ। একেগৰাকী কবি নীলিম কুমাৰে বেষ্যা-জোনৰ ছবিও আঁকিছে একেই নিৰ্মমতাৰে। কাব্য জগতত একেৰাহে সৌন্দৰ্য আৰু যৌনাকাংক্ষাৰ প্ৰতীক সাপৰ দৰে গা- মোচৰা বেষ্যা জোনৰ বাবে টোপনি নাহে কবি নীলিম কুমাৰৰ :

“মোৰ টোপনি নাহে/আকাশত বহি আছে/ বেষ্যা জোন/ মেঘৰ জুপুৰিৰ দুৱাৰ খিৰিকী মেলি/

বহি আছে কৃষ্ণ দ্বিতীয়ৰ বেষ্যা জোন/....সাপৰ দৰে/ গা মোচৰিছে তাই/....” (বেশ্যা জোন : নীলিম কুমাৰ)

উল্লেখযোগ্য যে, “মানুহ অনুকুলে”, “সোমধিৰিৰ সোঁৱৰণী আৰু অন্যান্য কবিতা”, “পল অনুপলৰ আঁচ” আদি কাব্যগ্ৰন্থৰ কবি হীৰেন্দ্ৰ নাথ দত্তই অসমীয়া আধুনিক কবিতাক প্ৰাচীন লোককথা, উপমা-চিত্ৰকল্প আৰু গ্ৰাম্য শব্দৰ সুপ্ৰয়োগেৰে এক অনন্য সাংগীতিক মাত্ৰা প্ৰদান কৰি গৈছে। ঘৰুৱা আলফুলীয়া শব্দৰাজিৰ প্ৰয়োগেৰে নিজা কবিতাত সৌন্দৰ্যৰ অনুধাৱন, বিষাদপ্ৰস্তুতা আৰু স্মৃতি ৰোমন্থনৰ কাৰুণ্য অথবা নিসংগতাৰ আবেগক শব্দৰ অৰ্থৰ সিপাৰৰ ব্যঞ্জনা প্ৰদান কৰা সাহিত্য অকাডেমী আৰু অসম সাহিত্য উপত্যকা বঁটা বিজয়ী কবি হীৰেন্দ্ৰ নাথ দত্তৰ এটা অন্যতম জনপ্ৰিয় কবিতা হৈছে “সোমধিৰিৰ সোঁৱৰণী”। “সোমধিৰিৰ সোঁৱৰণী”—ত যি বাটেৰে লচপটী দাৱনী আৰু বগাকৈ বগলী ঘৰমুৱা হয়, সেই সোমধিৰি নদীৰ পাৰেদি চিকুণী আৰু তাইৰ প্ৰেমিক কবিও এদিন অহা-যোৱা কৰিছিল। লোককথাৰ আলম লৈ কবিয়ে বগলীক বগা ফোঁট খুজিছিল। বগলী সবাহলৈ নোযোৱাৰ কাৰণ সুধিছিল। এই হাতস্বৰ্গকালীন নিষ্পাপ সৰলতাৰে ভৰা সাধুকথাৰ দৰে পৃথিবীখনত একালত কবি আৰু চিকুণী বিচৰণ কৰাৰ ইংগিতে দুয়োৰে আশৈশৱ নিবিড় বন্ধুত্বৰ কথা সোঁৱৰায়। অথচ সাধুকথাৰ বগলী, স্বয়ং সাধুকথা, সপ্তমীৰ জোন, বাতিৰ পিঠিত মহাপৰ্ব লিখা তৰা, “জিলি আৰু হুদু আৰু দাদুৰী” বা ৰমন্যাসিক কবিকুলে পৰম্পৰাগতভাৱে মহিমামণ্ডিত কৰা খোদ সোমধিৰি নদী কোনোৱেই প্ৰেমিক কবি বা চিকুণীৰ আপোন নহয়। অথবা পৰো নহয়। সেয়ে, সোমধিৰিৰ বানে আন জাগতিক বস্তুৰ দৰে হেপাৰৰ চিকুণীকো উটুৱাই নিব পাৰে। চিকুণীক হেৰুৱাই “চেঙেলীয়া সোমধিৰি পাৰ হৈ আহি, পাৰ হৈ লুইতৰো দলদোপবোৰ” প্ৰেমিক কবি চিৰন্তন শান্তিৰ প্ৰতীক মাজুলীত ধৰ্মশ্ৰয়ী হৈছে। ফাৰ ফ্ৰম দ্য মেডিং ক্ৰাউড, অৰ্থাৎ জনসমাগমৰ পৰা নিলগৰ মাজুলীত একালৰ প্ৰেমিক-কবি কেৱলীয়া ভকত হৈছে। অথচ হাত চিকুণীৰ প্ৰেম-স্মৃতি-তৃষ্ণাৰ দগ্ধগীয়া যা ডোখৰ কবিৰ মনৰ পৰা আধ্যাত্মিক প্ৰশান্তিৰ মলম-স্পৰ্শই শুকুৱাই নাইকিয়া কৰিব পৰা নাই। দুদিনীয়া সংসাৰৰ নশ্বৰতাৰ উৰ্ধত ধৰ্মই শিকোৱা পৰমপদ তথা চিৰন্তন সত্যৰ উৎস সন্ধানতো ব্যৰ্থ হৈছে জাগতিক প্ৰেমত ব্যৰ্থ প্ৰেমিক কবি। কবিক “অহা বেলি অহা বেলি কৰি /বাৰেপতি বেলি নকৰিবি” বুলি সোঁৱৰাই-কুটুৰি থকা গ্ৰাম্য সাৰল্যৰে ভৰা চিকুণীৰ দুৱাৰ ব্যাকুল আকাংক্ষাৰ কৰুণ সলিল সমাধি কবিয়ে তিলমানো পাহৰিব পৰা নাই। তথাপি সকলো সামৰি-সূতৰি কবি মাজুলীৰ সত্ৰৰ নাম-প্ৰসংগত বহিছে। তেনেতে



এদিন, মাজুলীৰ এখন সত্ৰত সন্ধিয়াৰ নাম-প্ৰসংগত বহি থাকোতে “টুপৰ কাষত” কবিয়ে জোনটো দেখিছে : নাম-প্ৰসংগ থলীৰ পৰা হঠাৎ জোনটো দেখি খং উঠিছে সত্ৰাশ্ৰয়ী কেৱলীয়া ভকত তথা হত চিকুণীৰ প্ৰেমাগ্নিত দন্ধ প্ৰেমিক কবিৰ। আপোন আকাংক্ষা আৰু প্ৰাপ্তিৰ অলংঘনীয় ব্যৱধান, পাৰ্থিৱ আৰু অপাৰ্থিৱ দ্বন্দ্ব প্ৰকট কৰি কেৱলীয়া ভকত প্ৰেমিক কবিয়ে ডবিয়াইছে নিস্পৃহ জোনবাইক :

“.....তোকনো কেলেই বাৰু/কেনেকেনো তেতিয়াতে কোন/

গুছি গ’ল/সোমধিৰি নদীৰ চলত?”  
(সোমধিৰিৰ সোঁৱৰণী : হীৰেন্দ্ৰ নাথ দত্ত)

তাৰ পাছত নিৰ্জনতা। নিমাত-নিতাল চৌদিশ। তেনেহ’লে বিশাল মহাকাশৰ বুকুত আমাৰ পৃথিৱীৰ নিচেই কাষত উপঙি থকা এক স্বৰ্গীয় জ্যোতিকণা জোনবাইয়ে বিজ্ঞানৰ জয়জয়কাৰ ঘোষণাক অসাৰ প্ৰমাণিত কৰি, সোমধিৰি পাৰৰ প্ৰেমিকৰ দৰে — চিৰ দিনৰ পৃথিৱী আৰু পৃথিৱীৰ মানুহৰ বুকুত পাৰাপাৰহীন, চিৰ বহস্যময়, দুভেদ্য ছুনামী-ধুমুহা-গাজনি-ভূমিকম্প-প্ৰেম-স্মৃতিমেদুৰতা জগাই তোলাতো সাঁচা ?

(গ)

আমেৰিকাৰ মহাকাশ সংস্থা “নাছা”-ই অলপতে প্ৰকাশ কৰা মতে, ২০১৬ চনৰ ১৪ নবেম্বৰৰ ৰাতি, (আমাৰ পাঁচ সহস্ৰবৰ্ষীয় ভাৰতীয় আধ্যাত্মিকতাৰ প্ৰাণস্পন্দনস্বৰূপ গোকুলৰ কৃষ্ণই যমুনাৰ পাৰত ৰাস-কেলী কৰা পূৰ্ণিমা)-ৰ আকাশৰ জোনবাইজনী আছিল ১৯৪৮ চনৰ পাছত সাধাৰণতে দেখা জোনবাইতকৈ তেৰ শতাংশ ডাঙৰ আৰু ত্ৰিশ শতাংশ উজ্জ্বল। কাৰণ বিগত ৬৯ বছৰৰ পাছত জোনবাই পৃথিৱীৰ আটাইতকৈ বেছি ওচৰ চাপি সেই ৰাতি (২০১৬ চনৰ ১৪ নবেম্বৰ) পৃথিৱী আৰু জোনবাইৰ দূৰত্ব হৈছিল মাত্ৰ ২২১,৫২৫ মাইল (৩৫৬৫১০ কিঃ মিটাৰ)। অথচ জ্যোতিষ শাস্ত্ৰ আৰু জ্যোতিষী শ্যেৰপীয়েৰক নস্যাত্ কৰি, সেইৰাতি, পৃথিৱীৰ ক’তো প্ৰাকৃতিক ছুনামী-ধুমুহা-গাজনি-ভূমিকম্প সংঘটিত হোৱা নাছিল। “নাছা”-ৰ মতে ২০১৬ চনৰ ১৪ নবেম্বৰৰ আকাশৰ জোনবাইজনীৰ দৰে ‘অনস্বীকাৰ্যভাৱে সুন্দৰ’—“undeniably beautiful” জোনবাই আকাশত আকৌ দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যাব ২০৩৪ চনৰ ২৫ নবেম্বৰত।

## শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ : এক চমু বিশ্লেষণ

নয়ন চেতিয়া

অসমীয়া বিভাগ, তেজপুৰ বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

### অৱৰণিকা :

যি প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ মাধ্যমেৰে শিশুৱে এক বা একাধিক ভাষা শিকে, সেই প্ৰক্ৰিয়াকে ভাষা আহৰণ বোলে। জন্মৰ পৰা মানৱ শিশুৰ ক্ৰম বিকাশৰ বিভিন্ন স্তৰ পৰ্যালোচনা কৰিলে দেখা যায় যে জন্মৰ পাছৰ পৰাই শিশুটিয়ে মানৱ সমাজৰ লগত ভাৱ বিনিময়ৰ প্ৰচেষ্টা চলায়। এনে পৰিস্থিতিৰ মাজেৰে ভাষা আহৰণৰ আৰম্ভ হয়। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ এক স্বতঃস্ফূৰ্ত প্ৰক্ৰিয়া। ই শিশুৰ সহজাত প্ৰবৃত্তি। শিশুৱে ভাষা আহৰণ মূলতঃ প্ৰথম ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে বুলি লোৱা হয়। শিশুৰ এই প্ৰথম ভাষা আহৰণ হৈছে তাৰ মাতৃভাষা আহৰণ। শিশুৰ জন্মৰ পৰা ১৮ মাহ মানলৈ সি কল-কলনি, ধ্বনি- এইবোৰ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে আৰু ১৮ মাহ মান বয়সৰ পৰাই মাতৃভাষা বুজিব পৰা আৰু ক'ব পৰা হয়। মাতৃভাষা বুলি কওঁতে শিশুৱে যি ভাষিক পৰিৱেশত ডাঙৰ-দীঘল হয় সেই ভাষাই তাৰ মাতৃভাষা বা প্ৰথম ভাষা হ'ব। অসমীয়া পৰিয়ালৰ ডাঙৰ হোৱা শিশুটোৰ স্বাভাৱিকতেই মাতৃভাষা অসমীয়া। কিন্তু এহাল অসমীয়া দম্পতি যদি চাকৰি সূত্ৰে দিল্লীত থাকে তেন্তে তেওঁলোকৰ সন্তানৰ মাতৃভাষা হ'ব হিন্দী, শিশুটিয়ে হিন্দীহে প্ৰথমে আহৰণ কৰিব, যদি মিচিং মহিলা এগৰাকী অসমীয়া বা আন জাতিৰে বিয়া হয় তেন্তে তেওঁৰ সন্তানৰ ভাষাটোও নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিব সন্তানটি পালিত হোৱা ভাষিক পৰিৱেশৰ ওপৰত। যদি ঘৰখনত মিচিং আৰু অসমীয়া দুয়োটাৰে সমান প্ৰচলন তেনে স্থলত শিশুটিৰ যিটো ভাষাৰ প্ৰতি আনুগত্য বেছি সিয়ে হ'ব তাৰ প্ৰথম ভাষা বা মাতৃভাষা। কেতিয়াবা আকৌ শিশু বিদেশত পালিত হ'লেও নিজ দেশ বা ৰাজ্যৰ ভাষাহে তাৰ মাতৃভাষা হয় সেইক্ষেত্ৰত মাক-দেউতাৰ প্ৰভাৱ সুনিশ্চিত। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণত মাকৰ ভূমিকা উল্লেখযোগ্য। যিহেতু শিশুটি বেছিভাগ মাকৰ লগতে থাকে গতিকে মাক গৰাকী কেনেকুৱা অৰ্থাৎ গৃহিনী নে কৰ্মৰত তাৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰিও শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ বেলেগ বেলেগ হ'ব পাৰে।

এটা শিশুয়ে জন্মৰ পাছৰ পৰাই তাৰ ভাষা আহৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া আৰম্ভ হয় বুলি কোৱা হয় যদিও প্ৰকৃততে তাৰ ১৮ মাহ বয়সৰ পৰাহে মাতৃভাষা আহৰণ হয়। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ লগত মন আৰু মগজু ওতঃপ্ৰোতভাৱে জড়িত। যদিও কোৱা হয় শিশুৱে ভাষা অনুকৰণৰ দ্বাৰা আহৰণ কৰে, তথাপি শিশুৱে বহুক্ষেত্ৰত বহুতো শব্দ, ভাষাৰ নিয়ম নিজা ধৰণে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত নোৰাম চমস্কিয়ে কৈছে, 'প্ৰতিজন শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ বাবে জন্মগত ক্ষমতা আছে। শিশুৱে বয়স্কৰ পৰা ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে যদিও সম্পূৰ্ণ অন্ধভাৱে অনুকৰণ নকৰে।'

### বিষয় অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য :

- ১) শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ কি হয় আৰু শিশুয়ে কেনেদৰে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে তাৰ আভাস দিয়া
- ২) শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ পৰ্যায় সমূহ বিশ্লেষণ কৰা
- ৩) শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ উপাদান সমূহ বিচাৰ কৰা
- ৪) শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ বিষয়ে অধ্যয়ন কৰা

### বিষয় অধ্যয়নৰ গুৰুত্ব :

'শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ' শীৰ্ষক বিষয়টো অধ্যয়নৰ গুৰুত্ব অপৰিসীম। ভাষা আহৰণ মানুহৰ সহজাত প্ৰবৃত্তি। এটা শিশুয়ে কেনেদৰে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে, কিমান বয়সৰ পৰা শিশুয়ে কথা কব পাৰে, শিশুটিৰ মাতৃভাষা কি, ভাষা আহৰণত কি কি উপাদানে ক্ৰিয়া কৰে, তাৰ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া সমূহ এইসকলোবোৰ

দিশৰ আলোচনা কৰাটো বৰ্তমান সময়ত অতি প্ৰাসংগিক।

### অধ্যয়নৰ পৰিসৰ :

‘শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ : চমু বিশ্লেষণ’ শীৰ্ষক আলোচনা পত্ৰখনিত প্ৰধানতঃ জন্মৰ পৰা তিনি বছৰ-চাৰি বছৰৰ ভিতৰৰ শিশুৰ বিষয়ে অধ্যয়ন কৰা হৈছে, লগতে আলোচনা পত্ৰখনি প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবলৈ অসমীয়া ভাষিক পৰিয়ালৰ তিনিজন শিশু ক্ৰমে ১২ মাহ, ১৮ মাহ আৰু ৩৬ মাহ বয়সৰ শিশুৰ পৰা তথ্য সংগ্ৰহ কৰিছিলোঁ।

### বিষয় অধ্যয়নৰ পদ্ধতি :

শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ : চমু বিশ্লেষণ শীৰ্ষক আলোচনা পত্ৰখনি প্ৰস্তুত কৰিবৰ বাবে মূলতঃ আমি দুটা পদ্ধতিৰ সহায় লৈছিলোঁ—

- ক) জৰীপ পদ্ধতি
- খ) বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতি

### পূৰ্বাকৃত অধ্যয়ন :

‘শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ: চমু বিশ্লেষণ’ শীৰ্ষক বিষয়ত অসমীয়া ভাষাত বিশেষ চৰ্চা হোৱা দেখা নাযায়। তথাপি দুই এজন ভাষাবিজ্ঞানীয়ে এই সম্পৰ্কত চৰ্চা কৰিছে। ড° ফণীন্দ্র নাৰায়ণ দত্ত বৰুৱাই ২০০৬ চনত প্ৰয়োগ ভাষাবিজ্ঞানৰ ৰূপৰেখা প্ৰকাশ কৰি উক্ত কিতাপখনত মাতৃভাষা আহৰণৰ বিষয়ে বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। নাহেন্দ্ৰ পাদুৰ সম্পাদিত ভাষাৰ তত্ত্ব কথা গ্ৰন্থত বাসন্তী দেৱীয়ে ‘মনোভাষাবিজ্ঞান এটি চমু পৰিচয়’ শীৰ্ষক প্ৰবন্ধটোত শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ কথা উল্লেখ কৰিছে। পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত যতীন্দ্রনাথ গোস্বামীয়ে ২০০৮ চনত ‘মাতৃভাষা শিক্ষণ’ নামেৰে এখন গ্ৰন্থ প্ৰকাশ কৰে। ২০২১ চনত নিপন কলিতা আৰু ভৃগুভূম বৰা সম্পাদিত ভাষাবিজ্ঞান আৰু অসমীয়া ভাষা সংকলনখনিত ব্ৰজেন বৈশ্যই শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ শীৰ্ষক এটি প্ৰবন্ধ লিখে।

### বিষয় বিশ্লেষণ :

#### শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ পৰ্যায় :

জন্ম হৈয়ে এটি শিশুৱে ভাষা আহৰণৰ ক্ষমতা লাভ নকৰে। ভাষা আহৰণৰ বাবে শিশুৱে বিভিন্ন পৰ্যায় বা স্তৰ অতিক্ৰম কৰে। শিশুটিৰ জৈৱিক পৰিপক্বতা আৰু পৰিৱেশেও শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ পৰ্যায়ৰ মূল উপাদান। ভাষা আহৰণ কালত শিশুৱে মূলতঃ ৬টা পৰ্যায়ৰ মাজেদি অতিক্ৰম কৰি ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে। সেই স্তৰ বা পৰ্যায় কেইটাত কেনেকৈ শিশুৱে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে উদাহৰণসহ তলত চমু বিৱৰণ দিয়া হৈছে—

#### ক) প্ৰাক-কথন বা কুৰিৰ পৰ্যায় (Pre-talking/ cooking) (০-৬ মাহ) :

বলিঞ্জাৰ মতে (Bolinger) এই প্ৰাক-কথন বা কুৰিং স্তৰত শিশুৱে মানুহৰ শব্দ আৰু পৰিৱেশৰ প্ৰতি সঁহাৰি স্বৰবৰ্ণৰ দৰে কেতবোৰ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। জন্মৰ পাছতে শিশুৱে পৃথিৱীখনত নিজকে আচহুৱা অনুভৱ কৰি কান্দিবলৈ লয় আৰু লাহে লাহে দুই তিনি মাহৰ পাছত পৰিৱেশৰ লগত খাপ খায় শিশুৱে কল কলাবলৈ ধৰে। বলিঞ্জাৰে কোৱাৰ দৰে ঠিক চাৰি মাহ মান বয়সৰ শিশুৱে কল কলাই স্বৰবৰ্ণ ধৰ্মী (Value like) উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। প্ৰাপ্ত তথ্যনুসাৰে যেনে অ’, অ, ই, উ, ইয়ে আদি। এনে স্বৰবৰ্ণধৰ্মী উচ্চাৰণ বোৰ চাৰিৰ পৰা ছয় মাহ মানৰ ভিতৰত ব্যঞ্জনধৰ্মী উচ্চাৰণলৈ পৰিৱৰ্তন হোৱাও পৰিলক্ষিত হয়। যেনে - কুউ, কেএ, গুউউ, কিউ। কু-কুৰনি কৰাৰ দৰে হয় বাবেও বহুতে এই স্তৰটোক কুৰিং পৰ্যায় বা কু-কুৰনি পৰ্যায় বুলিও কয়। এই স্তৰত উচ্চাৰিত ধ্বনিবোৰ উচ্চাৰণ বোৰৰ কোনো অৰ্থ নাথাকে। আৰু এইবোৰ শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ বাবে বাগিদ্ৰীয় চৰ্চাৰ প্ৰাৰম্ভিক স্তৰ।

খ) বেবলিং পৰ্যায় : (৬-৮ মাহ) জন্মৰ ৬ ৰ পৰা ৮ মাহলৈ এই সময়খিনিত শিশুৱে ব্যঞ্জনবৰ্ণ ধৰ্মী উচ্চাৰণ কৰিবলৈ ধৰে। এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে স্বৰ আৰু ব্যঞ্জন বৰ্ণবোৰ স্পষ্টকৈ উচ্চাৰণ কৰিব পৰা হয়গৈ। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে — মা-মা-মা, বা-বা-বা, কা-কা, টা-টা, দা-দা, না-না-না, আদি। এনেধৰণে বৰ্ণ উচ্চাৰণ কৰিয়েই শিশুৱে এই পৰ্যায়ত অনুভৱ/ভাব প্ৰকাশ কৰে। এই পৰ্যায়ৰ শিশুৱে বেছিকৈ উচ্চীৰ্য ব্যঞ্জন ধ্বনিবোৰ বেছি উচ্চাৰণ কৰা দেখা যায়। মা-বা-পা।

গ) এটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায় : এবছৰমান বয়সৰ ভিতৰত অথবা এবছৰৰ পৰা ডেৰ বছৰ বয়সৰ ভিতৰত এটি শিশুৱে সহজেই বিভিন্ন শব্দ উচ্চাৰণ কৰিবলৈ ধৰে। এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে সেইবোৰ শব্দ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে, যি বোৰ সহজে উচ্চাৰণ কৰিব পৰা সচৰাচৰ পৰিচিত শব্দ। দেখা যায় যে এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে তুলনামূলকভাৱে সম্বন্ধবাচক বিশেষ্য শব্দবোৰ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। যেনে - মামা, বাবা, দাদা, পাপা, নিনা, কাকা আদি। এই স্তৰটোত শিশুৰ বাগিদ্ৰীয় পূৰ্ণ নোহোৱাৰ বাবে কিছুমান শব্দ ভালকৈ উচ্চাৰণ কৰিব নোৱাৰে আৰু বিভিন্ন পৰিৱেশ-পৰিস্থিতিক বুজাবলৈ নিজা ধৰণে কিছুমান উচ্চাৰণ কৰে যেনে—

- ১) ফুৰিবলৈ যোৱা প্ৰসংগত — ফু ফু
- ২) দিয়া বা খোজা প্ৰসংগত — দেদে
- ৩) মাছ বুজাবলৈ — জিজি
- ৪) ভাত বুজাবলৈ — মাম
- ৫) মেকুৰী বুজাবলৈ — মিউ মিউ

- ৬) কুকুৰ বুজাবলৈ — ভৌ ভৌ  
 ৭) নঞার্থত প্ৰসংগত — না না  
 ৮) নিচা (সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দ) —নিচা  
 ৯) খুৰী বুজাবলৈ — খু/ খুখু  
 ১০) পেহী বুজাবলৈ — পি  
 ১১) বৰতা বুজাবলৈ— 'ব' /বৰ  
 ১২) পাপা বুজাবলৈ — পা

দেখা যায় শিশুৱে বহুতো সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দক এটা অক্ষৰত উচ্চাৰণ কৰিবলৈ লয়। বহুতো চিনাকী শব্দৰ উচ্চাৰণ এই পৰ্যায়তেই সম্ভৱ হৈ উঠে।

### ঘ) দুটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায় :

সাধাৰণতে এটি শিশুৱে এক-ডেৰ বছৰৰ পৰা দুবছৰৰ ভিতৰত দুটা শব্দ লগ লগাই এটা বাক্য ক'ব পৰা হয়। এইখিনি সময়ত শিশুৱে বহুতো শব্দ নতুনকৈ আহৰণ কৰে। উল্লেখ্য যে, পৰিৱেশৰ পৰা আহৰণ কৰা শব্দবোৰৰ অৰ্থ বুজিবলৈ শিশুক সময়ৰ প্ৰয়োজন, তথাপিও শিশুৱে সচৰাচৰ ব্যৱহৃত অতি প্ৰয়োজনীয় কিছুমানশব্দ কম সময়তে আহৰণ কৰি বাক্য উচ্চাৰণ কৰিবলৈ ধৰে। Frnkyen ৰ মতে এটি শিশুৱে এই পৰ্যায়ত প্ৰকৃততে দুটা শব্দৰ বাক্য গঠন কৰি শব্দৰ অৰ্থগত দিশটোৰ লগত সম্বন্ধ স্থাপন কৰে। বিশেষকৈ সম্বন্ধবাচক বিশেষ্য শব্দৰ লগত ক্ৰিয়া সম্বন্ধীয় শব্দ যোগ দি দুটা শব্দৰ বাক্য উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে

মা যাম ( মাৰ ওচৰলৈ যাম)

পা দিম (পাপাক দিম)

বা খা ( বা খাৰক/খা) আদি

আকৌ দেখা যায় বিভিন্ন শব্দৰ লগত ক্ৰিয়া সম্বন্ধীয় শব্দ যোগ দি দুটা শব্দৰ বাক্য উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। যেনে

মাম খাম (ভাত খাম)

জিজি খাম (মাছ খাম)

বিবি দে (বিস্কুট দে)

গি গি যাম (গাড়ীত যাম/উঠিম)

ফুফু যাম (ফুৰিবলৈ যাম)

মম দে (মাংস দে) আদি

আকৌ দেখা যায় একেটা শব্দকে দুবাৰ একেলগে উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। যেনে—

দাই-দাই (দদাইদেউ/খুৰা)

ফুফু-ফুফু (ফুৰিবলৈ যাওঁযাম)

মম-মম (মাংস খোৱা বা লাগে বুজাবলৈ)

নাই-নাই (ভাত খোৱাৰ প্ৰসংগত)

পিত-পিত (গাড়ী মটৰৰ প্ৰসংগত)

আহ-আহ (কিবা বস্তু বা কোনো জীৱক মৰাৰ প্ৰসংগত)

এনেকৈয়ে বিভিন্ন প্ৰসংগত শিশুৱে এই স্তৰত দুটা শব্দৰ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে।

ঙ) বাক্য প্ৰয়োগত পৰ্যায় : প্ৰায় ডেৰ-দুই বছৰ মান বয়সৰ পৰা তিনি বছৰ বয়সৰ ভিতৰত শিশুৱে বিভিন্ন শব্দ অৰ্থাৎ বিশেষ্য, বিশেষণ, ক্ৰিয়াবাচক শব্দ আহৰণ কৰিব পৰা হয়। ইবোৰৰ উচ্চাৰণৰ লগতে তাৰ অৰ্থৰ সৈতে সম্বন্ধ স্থাপন কৰিবলৈ সক্ষম হয়।

এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে বাক্য গঠন কৰিব পৰা হয়। ভিন ভিন বিশেষ্য অথবা বিশেষণৰ শব্দৰ সৈতে ক্ৰিয়াপদ সমূহ লগ লগাই বাক্য গঠন কৰে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত শিশুৰ বাক্য ব্যাকৰণৰ নিৰ্দিষ্ট নিয়মৰ বাহিৰত। শিশুৰ দ্বাৰা উচ্চাৰিত বাক্য একেবাৰে সহজ-সৰল, ব্যাকৰণৰ নীতি-নিয়মৰ আওতাৰ পৰা বহু দূৰ আতৰত। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে —

মম খাম (মা ভাত খাওঁ)

মা জিজি খাম (মা মাছ খাওঁ)

মা ফুফু যাম (মা ফুৰিবলৈ যাওঁ)

মা পিত্ পিত্ যাম ( মা গাড়ীত যাম)

বা আহ (বাইদেউ আহক)

মোক দে (মোক দিয়কযদিয়া)

মই জজ কৰিম (মই গা ধোওঁ)

মম খাম (মাংসৰে ভাত খাওঁ)

পাপা যাম (পাপাৰ ওচৰলৈ যাম)

চ) ভাষাৰ প্ৰায়োগিক ক্ষমতা লাভৰ পৰ্যায় : Bolingerৰ মতে এই পৰ্যায়টোত অৰ্থাৎ প্ৰায় তিনি মান বছৰ বয়সৰ পৰা শিশুৱে অধিক শব্দ আহৰণ কৰে আৰু সঠিক প্ৰসংগৰ সঠিক অৰ্থৰ সৈতে। এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে কাণেৰে যি শুনে আৰু চকুৱে যি দেখা পাই এই সকলো বস্তুৰ মাজত লাহে লাহে অৰ্থ স্থাপন কৰি ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে। এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে সংশ্লিষ্ট ভাষাৰ প্ৰায়ভাগ গঠন আয়ত্ত কৰি লয়। তদুপৰি এই সময়ত শিশুৰ দৈহিক গঠন পৰিপক্ব হয় আৰু বাগযন্ত্ৰও পূৰ্ণ হয়। যাৰ ফলত সাধাৰণ এটি শিশুৱে সকলোবোৰ চিৰাচৰিত শব্দ উচ্চাৰণ কৰিব পাৰে, আৰু বাক্যও গঠন কৰিব পৰা যায়। উদাহৰণস্বৰূপে এই সময়ত শিশুৱে নিজৰ পৰিচয়, নিজৰ মাক-দেউতাকৰ নাম, গাঁৱৰ নাম ক'ব পৰা হয়, বিভিন্ন প্ৰয়োজনীয় বাক্য ক'ব পাৰে। এক কথাত মানুহৰ লগত বাদানোবাদ কৰিব পৰা হয়। এই সময়তে বহুতো শিশু আজিকালি নাৰ্চাৰী স্কুল, কিণ্ডাৰ গাৰ্ডেন, মণ্টেশ্বৰী এনেকুৱা প্লে স্কুল বোৰলৈ যায় ফলত ভাষা আহৰণ অধিক ক্ষিপ্ৰতৰ

আৰু সহজে হয়। যেনে—

মোৰ নাম গুণগুণ

মা নাম দিপী (ডিম্পী)

মা মোক দিয়া

পা ক'লৈ গ'ল (পাপা ক'লৈ গ'ল)

দাই দাই তোমা ভাল নে? (দদাই তোমাৰ ভাল নে?)

তদুপৰি এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে বিভিন্ন নিৰ্দিষ্টতাবাচক প্ৰত্যয়বোৰো আহৰণ কৰি প্ৰশ্নবোধক বাক্য ক'ব পৰা যায়।

সেইটো... সেইটো কি? (সেইটো কি?)

এইটো কাৰ?

আকৌ এই পৰ্যায়ত বিভিন্ন ছন্দ লিখা পদ্যও পাব পৰা যায়।

দেখা যায় যে শিশুৱে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰোতে জ্যেষ্ঠৰ পৰা অনুকৰণ কৰে আৰু নিজাকৈ কিছুমান সংযোগ কৰে। যেনে—

ন + খায় = নাখায়, নএগৰ্থক প্ৰসংগত ব্যৱহাৰ হয়। আৰু এইটো ডাঙৰক কোৱা শুনি নিজেও কয় আৰু বেলেগে সদৰ্থক শব্দক নএগৰ্থক কৰাৰ সময়ত 'ন' প্ৰয়োগ কৰে। যেনে ন + পাৰে = নাপাৰে বুলি কয়। কিন্তু প্ৰকৃততে নোৱাৰেহে শুদ্ধ, আকৌ গৈছো, আছো এই শব্দবোৰ শুনি শুনি যাম, যাব ইবোৰৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি 'যাইছো', 'যাই' আছিলো আদি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা পৰিলক্ষিত হৈছে।

এই পৰ্যায়ত শিশুৱে সদায় নতুন নতুন শব্দৰে বাক্য গঠন কৰে, এই পৰ্যায়টো শব্দ আহৰণৰ সকলোতকৈ দ্ৰুততৰ স্তৰ।

### শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ উপাদান ৪

শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া মূলত দুটা উপাদানৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰশীল। সেইকেইটা হ'ল— ১) দৈহিক উপাদান আৰু ২) চৌপাশৰ পৰিৱেশ বা পৰিৱেশিক উপাদান। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণত মনো-দৈহিক অৱস্থা আৰু চাৰিওফালৰ পৰিৱেশ এই দুয়োটা কাৰকেই ক্ৰিয়া কৰে। এই উপাদান দুটা পৰস্পৰ পৰিপূৰক। সুস্থ দৈহিক মানসিক বিকাশে শিশুক পৰিৱেশৰ পৰা ভাষা আহৰণত সহায় কৰে।

শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ বাবে মানৱ দেহটোৱে বিশেষ ভাৱে ভূমিকা লয়। দেহৰ জৈৱিক বৃদ্ধিয়ে শিশুক ভাষা আহৰণৰ বাবে উপযোগী কৰি তোলে। মন আৰু শৰীৰৰ সু-সমন্বয়তহে সৃষ্টি হয় ভাষাৰ। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ মানৱ দেহৰ মূল অংশ হ'ল বাগিন্দ্ৰিয়বোৰ যেনে— ওঁঠ, দাঁত, জিভা, জিভামূল, দন্তমূল, তালু, আলজিভা, গলকোষ, কণ্ঠ, স্বৰতন্ত্রী, নাসিকা বিৰৰ, মুখ বিৰৰ, বাগযন্ত্ৰ। এই বাগিন্দ্ৰিয়ৰ দ্বাৰাই

ধ্বনিবোৰ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে।

এই বাগিন্দ্ৰিয়ৰ লগতে ধ্বনি উচ্চাৰণৰ বিশেষ ভূমিকা লোৱা আন এক অংগ হ'ল হাওফাওঁ।

ভাষা আহৰণ কাৰ্যত মানুহৰ মগজুৰ ভূমিকা অনস্বীকাৰ্য। শ্ৰৱণেন্দ্ৰিয়ত ধ্বনি বা নাদ পৰা পাছত তাৰ অৰ্থবোধ জন্মাই মগজুৱে, প্ৰতিক্ৰিয়া কি হ'ব সেয়াও নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে মগজুৰ ওপৰত। মগজু দুটা অংশত বিভক্ত চেৰিব্ৰাম আৰু পশ্চাদ মস্তিস্ক। চেৰিব্ৰামৰ দুটা অংশ সোঁ আৰু বাওঁ যাৰ এই বাওঁ অংশই মানুহৰ ভাষাৰ উচ্চাৰণ আৰু বোধ জন্মায়। মগজুৰ এই স্থানত আঘাত পালে শিশুৰ/মানুহৰ ভাষা আহৰণত ব্যাঘাত জন্মিব পাৰে। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণত আন এক বিশেষ উপাদান হ'ল— পৰিৱেশ। শিশুৱে তাৰ ঘৰৰ পৰিৱেশত, আত্মীয়লোক, স্থানীয় পৰিৱেশৰ বিভিন্ন ব্যক্তিৰ লগত মত বিনিময় কৰে। আৰু শিশুৱে কাণেৰে শুনা কথাবোৰ পাছত ব্যৱহাৰিক ৰূপত প্ৰয়োগ কৰে। শিশুৱে অনায়াসে পৰিৱেশত ডাঙৰ সেই পৰিৱেশৰ ভাষা সহজেই শিকিব পাৰে। মাক-দেউতাকে কি কৈছে তাক শুনি শুনিও শিশুৱে ভাষা আয়ত্ত্ব কৰে। যদি এটা শিশুৰ জন্ম হয় অসমীয়া পৰিয়ালত আৰু বসবাস কৰে দিল্লীত তেতিয়া হ'লে সেই অসমীয়া শিশুটোৱে অসমীয়াৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে হিন্দী ভাষাহে সহজে ক'ব বা আহৰণ কৰিব পাৰিব। কিয়নো শিশুটো যি পৰিৱেশত পালিত হৈছে তাৰ চৌপাশে আধিক্য লোক হিন্দী ভাষী। ঠিক তেনেকৈ যদি ভাৰতীয় হিন্দী বা অসমীয়া যিকোনো শিশু এটা আমেৰিকা-ইংলেণ্ডৰ দৰে ঠাইত পালিত হয় তেতিয়া তাৰ সহজে আহৰণশীল ভাষা হ'ব ইংৰাজী। অৰ্থাৎ শিশু এটাৰ প্ৰথম ভাষা মাতৃভাষা বুলি কোৱা হয় আৰু এই মাতৃভাষা কেৱল মাকৰ মুখৰ ভাষা বা জন্মভূমিৰ ভাষাই নহয়, শিশুটি যি পৰিৱেশত ডাঙৰ হয়, যি ভাষা বেছিকৈ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে সেয়ে তাৰ মাতৃভাষা আৰু সেই ভাষাই শিশুৱে প্ৰথমে আহৰণ কৰে। এই দুটা উপাদানৰ উপৰিও শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ আন এক উপাদান হ'ল বলিষ্ঠ অভিৰোচন (Strong motivation) ভাষা আহৰণৰ বাবে শৈশৱ বা শিশুকাল সোণালী সময়। শৈশৱ কালতেই শিশুৰ নজনাটো জানিবলৈ, নেদেখাটো দেখিবলৈ, নুবুজাটো বুজিবলৈ, মন মগজু কৌতুহলী হৈ থাকে। ফলত শিশুৱে জ্যেষ্ঠক বিভিন্ন প্ৰশ্ন কৰে আৰু এনেকৈ সি ভাষাটো আহৰণ কৰে। শিশুৱে তাৰ চাহিদা পূৰণৰ বাবে বিভিন্ন সময়ত ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে। তদুপৰি দোকানত দেখা বিভিন্ন বস্তুবোৰ দেখি সেইটো কি। এইটো লাগে এনেকৈও শব্দৰ লগতে বস্তুটোৰ চাম্ফুৰ অভিজ্ঞতাৰ সৈতে অৰ্থ সম্বন্ধ স্থাপন কৰিব পাৰে।

শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণত আন এক উপাদান হ'ল পঞ্চ ইন্দ্ৰিয়ৰ দ্ৰুত সঞ্চালন। শিশুৰ কাণ, চকু, ওঁঠ, জিভা,

ছাল অনববতে সক্ৰিয় হৈ থাকে লগতে মগজুও তীক্ষ্ণ অৱস্থাত থাকে। ফলত সহজে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰিব পাৰে। তদুপৰি শিশু অৱস্থাত শিশুৰ হাতত অপৰ্যাপ্ত সময়। এনে সময়তেই এইকেইটা ধ্বনি শব্দ আহৰণ কৰিব লাগিব বুলি কথা নাই, শিশুৱে যেতিয়াই তেতিয়াই শিশুকালত ভাষা আহৰণ কৰিব পাৰে।

### শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া :

শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ শিশুৰ এটা সহজাত প্ৰবৃত্তি। জন্মৰ পৰাই শিশুৱে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে। ই শিশুৰ জন্মগত গুণ। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰ আমি প্ৰক্ৰিয়া বুলি ক'বলৈ গ'লে মূলতঃ শ্ৰৱণ-নিৰ্বাচন আৰু অনুকৰণৰ প্ৰসংগই উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰি।

**শ্ৰৱণ আৰু নিৰ্বাচন :** শিশুৱে সৰু কালৰ পৰাই ডাঙৰৰ মুখত যিশুনে, সেই ভাষা সকলো ফালৰ পৰাই জটিল। অৱশ্যে শিশুক উদ্দেশ্যি কোৱা ভাষা কিছু পৰিমাণে সৰল। তথাপিও শিশুক উদ্দেশ্যি কোৱা কথাবে পৰিমাণ তেনেই তাকৰ। শিশুৱে ডাঙৰৰ মুখত শুনা সেই জটিল ভাষাটোৰ পৰাই নিজস্ব নিৰ্বাচনেৰে প্ৰয়োজনীয় কথা খিনি লয়। দেখা যায় ধ্বনিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত কিছুমান ধ্বনিৰ ঠাইত বেলেগ ধ্বনি প্ৰয়োগ কৰে, আকৌ কিছুমান ধ্বনি এৰিয়েই দিয়ে। 'ৰ' ধ্বনিৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত এই সত্যাসত্য প্ৰমাণ হয়। যেনে— ৰং-অং, ৰ'ল-ল'ল, আৰু-আও আদি।

শব্দ আৰু বাক্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰটো একেই। ডাঙৰৰ মুখত শুনা শব্দ বাক্যৰ প্ৰয়োজনীয় অংশ নিৰ্বাচন কৰি তাক ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে। প্ৰথমে দেখা যায় শিশুৱে সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দবোৰ সহজে আহৰণ কৰে। যেনে মা, পা (পাপা), বা (বাই), দাই-দাই (দদাই), পি (পেহী) আদি। বাক্যৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত দেখা যায় শিশুৱে এপদীয়া বাক্য সহজে উচ্চাৰণ কৰে যেনে আহ, খাম, দে, যা, দাদি, আকৌ দুপদীয়া বাক্য যেনে— মা দিয়া, বা যায়, মই খাম আদি। এনেকৈয়ে শিশুৱে ডাঙৰৰ মুখত অহৰহ শুনি থকা শব্দ-বাক্যবোৰৰ পৰা প্ৰয়োজনীয়খিনি নিৰ্বাচন কৰি ব্যৱহাৰিক ৰূপত ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে।

**অনুকৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া :** শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণত অনুকৰণৰ ভূমিকা উল্লেখযোগ্য। এই অনুকৰণ শিশুক ডাঙৰে শিকাই নিনিয়ৈ অৰ্থাৎ ডাঙৰে তাক অনুকৰণ কৰিবলৈ উৎসাহিত নকৰে। শিশুৱে যি অনুকৰণ কৰে এয়া কোনো নিৰ্দিষ্ট ধ্বনি, শব্দ বা বাক্যৰ অনুকৰণ নহয়, ই আৰ্হি শব্দ বা বাক্যৰ অনুকৰণহে। যেনে— 'মই টিভি দেখিম', 'ইয়াত দেখিমটো চাম অৰ্থতহে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছে। অৰ্থাৎ মই অ পঢ়িম, মই নাচিম ইবোৰৰ লগত ৰজিতা খুৱাই শিশুৱে মই টিভি দেখিম বুলিছে। তেনেকৈ মই নাপাৰো— এই বাক্যাংশটোও অনুকৰণৰে ফল, ইয়াৰ অৰ্থ হ'ল মই নোৱাৰো,

কিন্তু শিশুটিয়ে কৰো ন + কৰো > নকৰো বুলি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ দৰেই ন + পাৰো > নাপাৰো ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছে। ঠিক তেনেদৰে দেখা যাম, যাব শব্দৰ গঠনৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰি শিশুটিয়ে গৈছে শব্দৰ সলনি যাইছে, গৈছিলৰ ঠাইত যাইছিল প্ৰয়োগ কৰে। এই প্ৰক্ৰিয়াটোক সাধাৰণীকৰণ বা **Generelization** প্ৰক্ৰিয়া বুলি কোৱা হয়। যিটো অনুকৰণৰ লগত অংগাংগীভাৱে জড়িত।

ভাষাতাত্ত্বিক দৃষ্টিৰে চালে শিশুৱে কেইটামান নিৰ্দিষ্ট প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ দ্বাৰা ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে। প্ৰথমে ধ্বনিৰ বিকাশ। শিশুৱে একেবাৰে প্ৰাৰম্ভিক অৱস্থাত স্বৰধ্বনি সমূহ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। যেনে- ও, অ', এই, অও আদি। তাৰ পাছত শিশুৱে ঔষ্ঠ ধ্বনি সমূহ সহজে উচ্চাৰণ কৰে যেনে - মা, বা, পাপা, পি আদি। পৰৱৰ্তী সময়ত লাহে সকলো ধ্বনি উচ্চাৰণ কৰিব পৰা হয়। কেতিয়াবা 'ৰ' ধ্বনি উচ্চাৰণৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত কিছু সমস্যা দেখা যায়। যেনে -ৰঙাটো অঙা, ৰ'দটো অ'দ, ৰ'ল-ল'ল, আৰুটো আও এনেদৰে উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। দ্বিতীয়তে অক্ষৰ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে যেনে আহ, মা, মাম, দে, বা। তেনেদৰে শব্দৰ উচ্চাৰণ কৰিবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰে বিভিন্ন সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দ যেনে -মা, পাপা, বা, দাদা, খু (খুড়ী), পি (পেহগী), ব (বৰ্তী), দাই দাই (দদাই) আদি উচ্চাৰণ কৰিবলৈ লয়। তদুপৰি বিভিন্ন ক্ৰিয়াবাচক শব্দ যেনে -মাম, খাম, দিম, আদি আহৰণ কৰে। শব্দ বা ৰূপৰ পাছতে তৃতীয়তে বাক্যাংশ বা শব্দ গুচ্ছ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। যেনে - মাম, খাম, মই যাম, মা যাম, বা দিম আদি।

শব্দৰ লগতে চতুৰ্থতে বাক্য গঠন কৰিবলৈ শিকে। লগতে কিছুমান ব্যাকৰণৰ নিয়মো আহৰণ কৰে।

বিভিন্ন বাক্য যেনে বিশেষকৈ 'ক'ৰে প্ৰশ্নবোধক বাক্য কৰে হয়যনহয়ৰে হোৱা প্ৰশ্নবোধক বাক্য বেছিকৈ উচ্চাৰণ কৰে। যেনে - সেইটো কি?, এইটো কি? কিয়?, তোমাৰ ভাল? বলটো কাৰ? আদি। আকৌ ব্যাকৰণৰ নিয়ম অৰ্থাৎ পূৰ্বতে উল্লেখ যি সাধাৰণীকৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া কাৰ দ্বাৰা কিছুমান নিয়ম নিজাকৈ বনাই লয় যেনে - পঢ়..পঢ়িছিলোৰ লগত মিলাই ... যা যাইছিলো, কৰো ... নকৰো লগত মিলাই পাৰো ...ন নাপাৰো বুলি ব্যৱহাৰক কৰে। এনেদৰেই ভিন ভিন প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰে শিশুৱে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে। আৰু অভিভাৱকে কৰি দিয়া শুধৰণিয়েও শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণৰে এক পদ্ধতি যেনে - (এইটো মাছ নহয়, মাংসহে) এইটো জিজি নহয়, মম। আদি।

ইয়াৰ পাছত অৰ্থবোধ প্ৰক্ৰিয়াতো জড়িত হৈ থাকে। বাক্যটো বা শব্দটো কি প্ৰসংগত কৈছে এই সকলোৰে বোধ শিশুৰ হয়। শিশুৰ দ্বাৰা ভাষা আহৰণৰ এই প্ৰক্ৰিয়া কেইটাক এনেদৰে দেখুওৱাব পাৰি :



**প্ৰাপ্ত তথ্য :** মই এই আলোচনাটোৰ বাবে তিনিটা শিশুৰ পৰা তথ্য সংগ্ৰহ কৰিছিলো। এই শিশুৰ বয়স আছিল এবছৰ, দ্বিতীয়টোৰ বয়স আছিল ১৮ মাহ আৰু কৃতীয়টোৰ বয়স আছিল ৮ মাহ। এই তিনিওটা শিশু অসমীয়া ভাষিক পৰিৱেশৰ হোৱাৰ বাবে উপৰোক্ত আলোচনাত বিশেষকৈ অসমীয়া ভাষাক অগ্ৰাধিকাৰ দিয়েই বিশ্লেষণ কৰা হৈছে। শিশুকেইটাৰ মাতৃৰ লগতো তেওঁলোকৰ সন্তানৰ ভাষা সম্পৰ্কত কথা পাতিছিলো। শিশুকেইটা কোন পৰ্যায়ত কেনেকৈ ভাষা আহৰণ কৰিছিল, মোৰ তথ্য সংগ্ৰহৰ পৰা প্ৰাপ্ত তথ্য তলত আগবঢ়ালো—

	ভাষা উচ্চাৰণ/আহৰণ আৰ্হি	ভাষা আহৰণৰ পৰ্যায়	প্ৰসংগ/অৰ্থ
প্ৰথম শিশু	ও, অ', ওও	কুৰিং	কলকলনি (স্বৰধ্বনি)
	মা, বা, পাপা	বেৰনিং	ঔষ্ঠধ্বনি উচ্চাৰণ সম্বন্ধবোধক শব্দ
	মামা, দাদা, পাপ, নিনা জিজি, মম	এটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায়	সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দ মাছ-মাংস
	মা মাম, পাপা যাম বা যাম ফু ফু ফু ফু	দুটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায়	মা/পাপা/বা ওচৰলৈ যাম ফুৰিবলৈ যোৱা
	মা মাম খাম মা ফুফু যাম	বাক্য প্ৰয়োগৰ পৰ্যায়	মা ভাত খাওঁ মা ফুৰিবলৈ যাওঁ
	মোৰ নাম গুণগুণ মা যাম দিপী দাই দাই তোমা ভাল নে?	ভাষাৰ প্ৰায়োগিক ক্ষমতা লাভৰ পৰ্যায়	মোৰ নাম গুণগুণ মাৰ নাম ডিম্পী দদাই তোমাৰ ভাল নে?

	ভাষা উচ্চাৰণ/আহৰণ আৰ্হি	ভাষা আহৰণৰ পৰ্যায়	প্ৰসংগ/অৰ্থ
দ্বিতীয় শিশু	ই, ইই, ইয়ে, অ', ও কুউউ	কুৰিং পৰ্যায়	কলকলনি
	বাবা, মা, পা, ব, দাদা	বেৰলিং পৰ্যায়	ব্যঞ্জনধ্বনি উচ্চাৰণ
	দাদা, কেকা, পি, মামা বাবা, আনি (নানী) মিমি, ভৌ-ভৌ, মম	এটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায়	সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দ মেকুৰী, কুকুৰ, মাংস
	মাম খাম, জিজি খাম বা যাম, গিগি যাম	দুটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায়	ভাত-মাছ খাওঁ ওচৰলৈ যাওঁ গাড়ীত উঠিম
	মা জিজি খাম মই জজ কৰিম	বাক্য প্ৰয়োগৰ পৰ্যায়	মা মাছ খাওঁ মই গা ধুম
	মা পা ক'ত গ'ল মা মোক দিয়া	ভাষাৰ প্ৰায়োগিক ক্ষমতা পৰ্যায়	মা পাপা ক'লৈ গ'ল



	ভাষা উচ্চারণ/আহৰণ আৰ্হি	ভাষা আহৰণৰ পৰ্যায়	প্ৰসংগ/অৰ্থ
তৃতীয় শিশু	উ, ও, অ', আহ, ওও ওউ ইই	কুৰিং পৰ্যায়	কলকলনি
	মা, বা-বা, দা-দা টা-টা, বা	বেৰলিং পৰ্যায়	ব্যঞ্জনধ্বনি উচ্চাৰণ
	আপা, নিনা, দাদা না-না, দে দে	এটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায়	সম্বন্ধবাচক শব্দ নাই, দিয়া
	পা দিম, বিবি দে পিত পিত, আহ আহ	দুটা শব্দৰ পৰ্যায়	পাপাক দিম বিষ্কুট দে গাড়ী মটৰ, আহা
	মা ফুফু যাম, মা পিত পিত যাম মোক দে মম মাম খাম	বাক্য প্ৰয়োগৰ পৰ্যায়	ম ফুৰিবলৈ যাওঁ মা গাড়ীত যাম মোক দিয়ক মাংসৰে ভাত খাম
	সেইটো কি? মইও যাম মই নাপাৰো সি খাই আছে	ভাষাৰ প্ৰায়োগিক ক্ষমতা পৰ্যায়	প্ৰশ্নবোধক বাক্য মই যাম সি গৈ আছে।

**সামৰণি :** শিশু ভাষা আহৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়াটো পৰ্যায়ক্ৰমে আগবাঢ়ি যোৱা এটা প্ৰণালীবদ্ধ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া। দেখা যায় বিভিন্ন স্তৰত শিশুৱে ভিন্নধৰণে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে। শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণত পৰিৱেশৰ ভূমিকা প্ৰধান। শিশুটোৱে বসবাস ভাষিক পৰিৱেশটোৱে শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণত প্ৰভাৱ পেলায়। পিতৃ-মাতৃৰ ভাষা বেলেগ বেলেগহোৱা বাবে এটা শিশুৰ দুটা প্ৰথম ভাষা থকাও দেখা যায়। যেনে শিৱসাগৰ দিচাংমুখৰ এজন ডেকা লোকৰ কন্যাই মিচিং আৰু বড়ো ভাষা সমানে ক'ব পাৰে কিয়নো তেওঁৰ মাক বড়ো মিচিং। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত দুটা মাতৃভাষা হ'লে কি হ'ব কেনেকে হ'ব এই সম্পৰ্কে গৱেষণা কৰাৰো থল আছে। যদি শিশু এটাই ১৮ৰ পৰা ৩০-৩৬ বছৰ বয়সলৈ কথা ক'ব নোৱাৰে কেতিয়া বিভিন্ন থেৰাপি বা ... ৰ দ্বাৰা ভাল কৰিবলৈ চোৱা হয়। যিহেতু শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ মন আৰু মগজুৰ সৈতেও জড়িত সেয়ে ইয়াক মনোভাষা বিজ্ঞান আৰু স্নায়ু ভাষা বিজ্ঞানৰো ভিতৰত ধৰিব পাৰি।

#### সামগ্ৰিক সিদ্ধান্ত :

- শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ শিশুৰ সহজাত প্ৰবৃত্তি।
- মাতৃভাষা আহৰণকে কোনো এটা শিশুৰ প্ৰথম ভাষা আহৰণ বুলি কোৱা হয়।
- যি ভাষিক পৰিৱেশত শিশুটো পালিত হয়, সংশ্লিষ্ট ভাষাটোৱে স্বাভাৱিকতে শিশুৰ মাতৃভাষা।
- ১৮ মাহ বয়সৰ পৰা এটা শিশুৱে মাতৃভাষা ক'ব পৰা বা বুজিবলৈ পৰা হয়।
- কুৰিং, বেৰলিং, এটা শব্দ, দুটা শব্দ, বাক্য প্ৰয়োগ, ভাষাৰ

প্ৰায়োগিক ক্ষমতা লাভ এই ৬টা পৰ্যায়ৰ মাজেদি শিশুৱে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে।

চ) শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়া মূলতঃ দৈহিক উপাদান আৰু পাৰিৱেশিক উপাদানৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰশীল।

ছ) শ্ৰবণ-নিৰ্বাচন আৰু অনুকৰণ প্ৰক্ৰিয়াৰ যোগেদিয়েই শিশুৱে সাধাৰণতে ভাষা আহৰণ কৰে।

#### প্ৰসংগ সূত্ৰ:

- ১) বৈশ্য ব্ৰজেন, শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ, সম্পা, নিপন কলিতা আৰু ভূগুপ্তম বৰা, ভাষাবিজ্ঞান আৰু অসমীয়া ভাষা, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৫৮, গুৱাহাটী, পূৰ্বায়ণ প্ৰকাশন, ২০২১।
- ২) দত্ত বৰুৱা ফণীন্দ্ৰ নাৰায়ণ, প্ৰয়োগ ভাষাবিজ্ঞানৰ ৰূপৰেখা, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৪, গুৱাহাটী, বনলতা ২০০৬।
- ৩) বৈশ্য ব্ৰজেন, শিশুৰ ভাষা আহৰণ, সম্পা, নিপন কলিতা আৰু ভূগুপ্তম বৰা, ভাষাবিজ্ঞান আৰু অসমীয়া ভাষা, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৬১, গুৱাহাটী, পূৰ্বায়ণ প্ৰকাশন, ২০২১।

#### প্ৰত্নপঞ্জী :

- ১) , গোস্বামী, গোলোক চন্দ্ৰ। ধ্বনি বিজ্ঞানৰ ভূমিকা। গুৱাহাটী। জ্যোতিনগৰ প্ৰকাশন। ২০১১।
- ২) গোস্বামী, যতীন্দ্ৰনাথ। মাতৃভাষা শিক্ষণ। গুৱাহাটী। বীণা লাইব্ৰেৰী। ২০০৮।
- ৩) দত্ত বৰুৱা, ফণীন্দ্ৰ নাৰায়ণ। প্ৰয়োগ ভাষাবিজ্ঞানৰ

- ৰূপৰেখা। গুৱাহাটী। বননতা। ২০০৬।
- ৪) দাস , চক্ৰেশ্বৰ । অসমীয়া ভাষা- শিক্ষণৰ ৰূপৰেখা।  
গুৱাহাটী। বাণী মন্দিৰ। ২০১২ ।
- ৫) পাদুন , নাহেদ্র। ভাষাৰ তত্ত্ব- কথা । গুৱাহাটী। বাণী  
মন্দিৰ। ২০০৪।
- ৬) বৰা ভৃগুত্তম আৰু কলিতা নিপম। ভাষাবিজ্ঞান আৰু  
অসমীয়া ভাষা। সম্পা। গুৱাহাটী। পূৰ্বায়ণ প্ৰকাশন। ২০২১  
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## শংকৰদেৱৰ ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটৰ মূল উৎস আৰু চৰিত্ৰৰ বৈচিত্ৰ্যতা

ড° মাধৱ চন্দ্ৰ বৰুৱা

অসমীয়া বিভাগ, শিৱসাগৰ কলেজ, জয়সাগৰ (স্বায়ত্বশাসিত)

### বিষয়বস্তুৰ সাৰাংশ :

মহাপুৰুষ শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱৰ অসমীয়া জাতি-সাহিত্য-সংস্কৃতিৰ এগৰাকী কৌশলী খনিকৰ। তেওঁ আছিল একাধাৰে কবি, চিত্ৰকৰ, অভিনেতা, গায়ক, নৰ্তক, ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰক লগতে এগৰাকী সুদক্ষ সমাজ সংগঠক। এক শৰণ নৱ বৈষ্ণৱ ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰৰ উদ্দেশ্যেৰে তেওঁ গীত-পদ, নাট-ভাওনা, তত্ত্বমূলক ৰচনা আদি সৃষ্টিৰ যোগেদি অসমীয়া তথা ভাৰতীয় সাংস্কৃতিক জগতলৈ বিপুল অৱদান দি থৈ গৈছে। তেওঁ ছয়খন নাট ৰচনা কৰিছিল। তাৰ ভিতৰত ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ হ’ল অন্যতম। চৰিতপুথিত উল্লেখ থকা অনুসৰি উক্ত নাটখন মহাপুৰুষজনাই দ্বিতীয়বাৰ তীৰ্থ ভ্ৰমণৰ পাছত ৰচনা কৰে। নাটখনৰ মূল উৎস হ’ল— ভাগৱত পুৰাণ। ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰো আকৌ কৃষ্ণ-চৰিত্ৰৰ লীলা প্ৰকাশক দশম স্কন্ধই হৈছে তেওঁৰ নাট্য কাহিনীৰ মূল উৎস। অৱশ্যে, নাটকীয় কাহিনীৰ প্ৰয়োজন অনুসৰি ভাগৱতৰ সমধৰ্মী গ্ৰন্থ হৰিবংশ আৰু বিষণপুৰাণৰ কথাবস্তু ঠায়ে ঠায়ে সংযোগ কৰিছে।

ঘটনাক্ৰম আৰু কথা-বস্তুৰ সংযোজনাৰ উপৰি চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ উপস্থাপন ৰীতি নাটখনৰ আন এক মনকৰিবলগীয়া দিশ। নাটখনিত নাট্যকাৰে প্ৰতিটো চৰিত্ৰকে স্বকীয় বৈশিষ্ট্যেৰে সমৃদ্ধ কৰি পাৰস্পৰিক বৈপৰীত্য আৰু সাদৃশ্যৰ ভিত্তিত অংকন কৰিছে। কৃষ্ণ-সত্যভামাৰ অনুৰূপ ইন্দ্ৰ-শশী পৰস্পৰ সহ-ধৰ্মিতাৰ ভিত্তিত অংকিত। আনহাতে, ৰুক্মিণী আৰু সত্যভামা পাৰস্পৰিক বৈপৰীত্যৰ ভিত্তিত চিত্ৰিত। নাটখনিত সত্যভামাক প্ৰাম্য দন্দুৰী তিৰোতাৰ সাঁচত গঢ়ি তুলিছে। সেইদৰে, দেৱকাৰ্যত পৰম আগৰণুৱা, কৃষ্ণৰ পৰম ভক্ত ভাগৱত-হৰিবংশৰ নাৰদক নাট্যকাৰে টুকীয়া ‘বীণবৰাগী’ ককাইৰ শাৰীলৈ নমাই আনিছে। আমাৰ অধ্যয়নত প্ৰধানতঃ এনেবোৰ বিষয়ে প্ৰাধান্য লাভ কৰিছে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতি মানি চলা হৈছে।

বীজশব্দ : শংকৰদেৱ, পাৰিজাত, হৰিবংশ, ভাগৱত, চৰিত্ৰ আদি।

### ০.০০ অৱতৰণিকা :

শংকৰদেৱ অসমীয়া নাট্য-সাহিত্যৰ জনক। তেওঁৰ পূৰ্বে অসমীয়া নাট্য সাহিত্যত কোনো প্ৰকাৰ নাটক ৰচিত হোৱাৰ লিখিত তথ্য পোৱা নাযায়। অৱশ্যে, কিছু নাটকীয় গুণবিশিষ্ট পুতলা নাচ, ওজাপালি, দেউধবনি নৃত্য, দেৱদাসী নৃত্য আদি পূৰ্বে পৰা অসমত সঞ্চালনিত প্ৰচলিত আছিল।

শংকৰদেৱৰ নাট ৰচনাৰ মূল উদ্দেশ্য আছিল নৃত্য-গীত আৰু অভিনয়ৰ সহায়ত জনসাধাৰণৰ মাজত ভগৱদ্

লীলা আৰু মাহাত্ম্য প্ৰচাৰ আৰু প্ৰসাৰ ঘটোৱা। সেয়ে শংকৰদেৱে অসমৰ থলুৱা ওজাপালি নৃত্য, দেৱদাসী নৃত্য আদি অনুষ্ঠানৰ উপৰিও অনা-অসমীয়া যক্ষগান, কথাকলি নৃত্য, বিদ্যাপতিৰ নাট আদিৰ পৰা সমল সংগ্ৰহ কৰি সিবোৰক সংস্কৃত নাট্যশৈলীৰ সাঁচত ঢালি ‘অংকীয়া’ নামেৰে এক শ্ৰেণী নাটৰ জন্ম দিয়ে। মন কৰিবলগীয়া কথা যে, শংকৰদেৱে নিজে তেওঁৰ নাটকৰ প্ৰসংগত ক’তো ‘অংকীয়া নাট’ বুলি

উল্লেখ কৰা নাই। তেওঁ নিজে 'নাটক', 'অংক' আৰু স্থান বিশেষে 'যাত্ৰা' শব্দহে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছে।

চৰিত পুথিত উল্লেখ কৰা অনুসৰি 'চিহ্নযাত্ৰা'ই হ'ল শংকৰদেৱৰ দ্বাৰা বিৰচিত প্ৰথম নাট। পিছে নাটখনৰ লিখিত ৰূপৰ নিদৰ্শন বৰ্তমান পাবলৈ নাই। ৰামচৰণ ঠাকুৰ 'গুৰু চৰিত'ত উল্লেখ কৰা মতে, চিহ্নযাত্ৰাৰ অভিনয়ত সাত বৈকুণ্ঠৰ পটৰ প্ৰয়োগ কৰা হৈছিল। "বৈকুণ্ঠ নগৰ পটত লেখিয়া অংক কৰিলন্ত তাৰ।।"

'চিহ্নযাত্ৰা'ৰ পিছত যি কেইখন নাট তেওঁৰ নামত পোৱা গৈছে, সেই কেইখন হ'ল — পত্নীপ্ৰসাদ, কালিয়দমন, কেলিগোপাল, ৰুক্মিণীহৰণ, পাৰিজাত হৰণ আৰু ৰামবিজয়। ইয়াৰে 'পত্নীপ্ৰসাদ' নাটখন বেলগুৰিত আৰু বাকী কেইখন নাট পাটবাউসীত আৰু 'ৰামবিজয়' কোচবিহাৰত অৰ্থাৎ জীৱনৰ শেষ বয়সত ৰচনা কৰে। তেওঁৰ নাটসমূহত ব্যৱহৃত নান্দী শ্লোক, প্ৰবোচনা, প্ৰস্তাৱনা শ্লোক, মুক্তি মংগল ভটিমা আৰু সূত্ৰধাৰৰ প্ৰয়োগৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত সংস্কৃত নাটৰ ওচৰ চপা। ভাষা কৃত্ৰিম, সাহিত্যিক। মৈথিলীৰ সৈতে অসমীয়াৰ সংমিশ্ৰণ। নাটকৰ গীতবোৰত কবিত্বগুণ আৰু সুৰৰ সাংগীতিক মাধুৰ্য বিৰাজমান। তেওঁৰ দ্বাৰা বিৰচিত নাট ছয়খনৰ ভিতৰত 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ'ক নাট্যগুণধৰ্মীতাৰ ফালৰ পৰা শ্ৰেষ্ঠ স্থান দিয়া হৈছে। 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ' ৰাম ৰায়ৰ অনুৰোধ ক্ৰমে শংকৰদেৱে দ্বিতীয়বাৰ তীৰ্থ ভ্ৰমণ কৰি উভতি আহি ৰচনা কৰে।

“পাৰিজাত হেন নাম অংক মহা অনুপাম  
কৰিলা শংকৰ তাত পাছে।

ৰচিলন্ত অংক যেবে লোকৰ আনন্দ তেবে  
মিলি গৈল দেখন্তে বিথয়।”

—(শংকৰ চৰিত : ৰামচৰণ ঠাকুৰ)

উল্লিখিত ছয়খন নাট ৰচনা কৰাৰ উপৰিও ৰামচৰণ ঠাকুৰৰ চৰিত পুথিত “জন্মযাত্ৰা” নামে আৰু গোপাল আতাৰ চৰিত পুথিত 'গোপী উদ্ধৰ সংবাদ'ৰ কাহিনীৰ আলমত আন এখন নাট ৰচনা কৰাৰ কথা উল্লেখ পোৱা গৈছে।

**০.০১ বিষয়বস্তু অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য আৰু গুৰুত্ব :**

**০.০১.১ : অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য :**

(ক) শংকৰদেৱৰ নাট তথা পাৰিজাত হৰণ' নাটৰ মূল সম্পৰ্কে পৰিচয় জ্ঞাপন।

(খ) 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ' নাটৰ চৰিত্ৰ সম্পৰ্কে সামগ্ৰিক অধ্যয়ন আৰু গুৰুত্ব বিচাৰ।

(গ) নাটকীয় চৰিত্ৰ বিশেষকৈ, নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণৰ যোগেদি পাঠকৰ মনত কৃষ্ণপ্ৰেম তথা কৃষ্ণভক্তিৰ প্ৰয়াস।

(ঘ) আলোচিত বিষয় সাধাৰণ চিন্তা-চৰ্চাৰ বিপৰীতে এক প্ৰণালীবদ্ধ ৰূপত অধ্যয়নৰ প্ৰয়াস।

**০.০১.২ বিষয়বস্তু অধ্যয়নৰ গুৰুত্ব :**

সাহিত্য সমাজৰ দাপোনস্বৰূপ; যাৰ যোগেদি সমাজৰ সমগ্ৰতা প্ৰকাশ পায়। সাহিত্যকে সমাজত ঘটা বিভিন্ন ঘটনা, সমাজত বাস কৰা মানুহৰ জীৱন শৈলী, আশা-আকাঙ্ক্ষা, চিন্তা-চৰ্চা আদি সাহিত্যৰ মাজেদি মূৰ্ত কৰি তোলে। তদুপৰি, লেখকৰ জীৱন দৰ্শন, দৃষ্টিভংগী, ৰচনা-শৈলী আদিও দাঙি ধৰে। গতিকে, কোনো এখন সমাজৰ প্ৰকৃত পৰিচয় পাবলৈ হ'লে উক্ত সমাজখনৰ ভিত্তিত ৰচিত সাহিত্যৰাজি অধ্যয়ন কৰাটো অতিকৈ প্ৰয়োজন। শংকৰদেৱ আৰু সমসাময়িক সমাজখনৰ বিষয়ে জানিবলৈ হ'লে আমি তেওঁৰ ৰচনাৰাজি অধ্যয়ন কৰিব লাগিব। সেয়ে বিষয়ৰ এনেবোৰ দিশৰ প্ৰতি গুৰুত্ব ৰাখি উক্ত বিষয়টো অধ্যয়নৰ বাবে প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে।

**০.০২ অধ্যয়নৰ পৰিসৰ :**

আমাৰ এই অধ্যয়নত শংকৰদেৱৰ 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ' নাটৰ মূল উৎস আৰু চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ বিষয়ে বিশ্লেষণ দাঙি ধৰা হ'ব। চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত নাটকৰ আটাইবোৰ চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণ কৰাৰ বিপৰীতে কেৱল মাথোঁ প্ৰধান চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ বিষয়ে পৰ্যালোচনা দাঙি ধৰা হৈছে।

**০.০৩ অধ্যয়নৰ পদ্ধতি :**

বিষয়বস্তু অধ্যয়নৰ ক্ষেত্ৰত প্ৰধানকৈ বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতি বিশেষভাৱে মানি চলা হৈছে।

**১.০০ বিষয় বিশ্লেষণ :**

**১.০১ পাৰিজাত হৰণ নাটৰ মূল :**

মহাপুৰুষ শংকৰদেৱৰ দ্বাৰা ৰচিত ছয় খন নাটৰ ভিতৰত 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ' এখন পূৰ্ণাঙ্গ নাটক। নাটখনত উল্লেখ কৰা মতে 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ' নাটখনৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ নাম হ'ল— 'নৰকাসুৰ বধ পাৰিজাত হৰণ লীলা যাত্ৰা'। 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ নাটৰ মূল কাহিনীভাগ প্ৰধানতঃ হৰিবংশ, ভাগৱত আৰু বিষ্ণুপুৰাণত বৰ্ণিত আছে। হৰিবংশত বৰ্ণিত পাৰিজাত হৰণৰ কাহিনী সুবিস্তৃত। ইয়াত নৰকাসুৰ বধ আৰু পাৰিজাত হৰণৰ আখ্যানে হৰিবংশৰ চৈধ্যটা অধ্যায় (বিষ্ণুপুৰ্বৰ ৬৩ অধ্যায়ৰ পৰা ৭৬ অধ্যায়লৈ) সামৰি লৈছে। ইয়াত সত্যভামাৰ মান, অভিমান, প্ৰণয় কোপৰ বৰ্ণনাৰ লগতে নাৰদৰ কাৰ্য সুন্দৰকৈ বৰ্ণনা কৰিছে। ভাগৱত পুৰাণত বৰ্ণিত আখ্যানে মাত্ৰ এটা অধ্যায়ত (দশম স্কন্ধৰ ৫৯ অধ্যায়ত- নাৰদৰ চতুৰালি, টুটকীয়া স্বভাৱ, সত্যভামাৰ মান-অভিমান আদিৰ কথা বিশদভাৱে বৰ্ণিত হোৱা নাই) আৰু বিষ্ণুপুৰাণত বৰ্ণিত আখ্যানে দুটা অধ্যায়ত (পঞ্চমাংশৰ ২৯ আৰু ৩০ অধ্যায়ত) বৰ্ণিত হৈছে।

হৰিবংশত বৰ্ণিত 'নৰকাসুৰ বধ' আৰু 'পাৰিজাত হৰণ'ৰ আখ্যান দুটা সুকীয়া। ভাগৱতত দুয়োটা ঘটনাকে

সংলগ্ন কৰিছে। ফলত শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ একেটা যাত্ৰাতে দুয়োটা কাৰ্য সম্পন্ন হৈছে। শংকৰদেৱে ভাগৱতৰ ঘটনাৰ ক্ৰম গ্ৰহণ কৰাত দুয়োটা ঘটনা নাট্য কাহিনীৰ অন্তৰ্ভুক্ত হৈছে।

ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰ মতে, শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণই নৰকক বধ কৰি বাহিৰে বাহিৰে স্বৰ্গলৈ গৈ ইন্দ্ৰক যুদ্ধত পৰাজয় কৰি পাৰিজাত হৰণ কৰিছে।

হৰিবংশৰ মতে, আকৌ দেৱতাসকলৰ অনুৰোধত নৰকক বধ কৰিয়ে কৃষ্ণই দ্বাৰকালৈ উভতি আহে। পাছত পত্নীসকলৰ সৈতে ৰুক্মিণীৰ ব্ৰত সমাপন কৰিবলৈ ৰৈৱতক পৰ্বতলৈ যায় আৰু তাতে দেৱৰ্ষি নাৰদে তেওঁক পাৰিজাত এপাহ দিয়েহি। কৃষ্ণই ৰুক্মিণীক সেই পাৰিজাত ফুলপাহ পিন্ধায় দিয়ে। সত্যভামাই দাসী এগৰাকীৰ মুখে সেই কথা জানিব পাৰি ৰোহ পাতে। কৃষ্ণই সত্যভামাক সন্তুষ্ট কৰিবলৈ তাইৰ সৈতে স্বৰ্গলৈ যায় আৰু ইন্দ্ৰক জিনি পাৰিজাত গছজোপাকে উঘালি আনে।

বিষ্ণুপুৰাণৰ কাহিনী ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰ লগত প্ৰায় একে যদিও ঠাই বিশেষে দুই-এটা ঘটনা ইয়াত বিশদভাৱে বৰ্ণিত হৈছে। যেনে— দেৱমাতা অদিতিয়ে কৃষ্ণক পূজা কৰাৰ বৰ্ণনা, কৃষ্ণই প্ৰাগ্‌জ্যোতিষপুৰৰ পৰা নিয়া বয়-বস্ত্ৰৰ বিৱৰণ, সত্যভামাৰ সৈতে ৰথীয়াবিলাকৰ কাজিয়া আদিৰ বৰ্ণনা অতি বিস্তৃত।

মহাপুৰুষ শংকৰদেৱে তেওঁৰ ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটৰ কাহিনীভাগ উক্ত তিনিওখন পুৰাণৰ পৰা সমল সংগ্ৰহ কৰি যোগ-বিয়োগৰ যোগেদি নাট্য কাহিনী সজাই তুলিছে। সত্যেন্দ্ৰনাথ শৰ্মাৰ ভাষাত — “শংকৰদেৱে হৰিবংশৰ কথাভাগ গ্ৰহণ কৰি ভাগৱতৰ ক্ৰম বা ঘটনাৰ আগ-পাছ অনুসৰণ কৰিছে।” তদুপৰি, তেওঁ বহু ক্ষেত্ৰত শ্ৰীধৰ স্বামীৰ ভাগৱত ভাৱাৰ্থ দীপিকাৰ টীকা ব্যাখ্যাকো অনুসৰণ কৰিছে।  
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## ২.০০ নাটখনৰ মূল চৰিত্ৰসমূহঃ

শংকৰদেৱৰ ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটত সৰু-বৰ ভালেকেইটা চৰিত্ৰই ভূমুকি মাৰিছে যদিও সত্যভামা, ৰুক্মিণী, শশী, শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ, নাৰদ আদিৰ চৰিত্ৰই প্ৰধান। তলত উক্ত চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ বিষয়ে আলোচনা দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হ’ল—

### (ক) সত্যভামা :

সত্যভামা ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটৰ মূল নায়িকা। নাটখনৰ নাৰী চৰিত্ৰসমূহৰ ভিতৰত সত্যভামা সবাতোকৈ আকৰ্ষণীয় চৰিত্ৰ। চৰিত্ৰটোৱে নাটত নৰকাসুৰ বধ আৰু পাৰিজাত হৰণ এই দুয়োটা ঘটনাৰ মাজত মূল যোগসূত্ৰ ৰক্ষা কৰিছে। নাটৰ সত্যভামা অভিমানী, জেদী, ঈৰ্ষাপৰায়ণা, বাক্‌চতুৰা লগতে কলহপ্ৰিয়। সতিনীৰ প্ৰতি তেওঁৰ মন

প্ৰতিদ্বন্দ্বীসুলভ ঈৰ্ষা মনোভাৱেৰে পৰিপূৰ্ণ। ভগৱান শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণক পতিকাৰ্ণে পাই যেনেদৰে তেওঁ গৰ্ব অনুভৱ কৰে, তেনেদৰে স্বামী কৃষ্ণৰ পৰা সৰ্বাধিক স্নেহ পাবলৈও সততে আশা কৰে। সেয়ে শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণই ৰুক্মিণীক নিজ হাতে পাৰিজাত ফুল পিন্ধোৱা খৱৰটো পাই সত্যভামাই থিৰেৰে থাকিব পৰা নাই, মুৰ্ছা গৈছে; চাৰিওফালে অন্ধকাৰ দেখিছে। পাছত ইন্দুমতিৰ বৃজনিত সত্যভামাই চেতনা লভিছে যদিও সন্তাপ কৰিবলৈ এৰা নাই। কৃষ্ণৰ এনে কাৰ্যত অপমান অনুভৱ কৰি নিজৰ জীৱনটোকে তেওঁ ধিক্কাৰ দিছে। শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণই সত্যভামাক সান্ত্বনা দি ‘একশত পাৰিজাত দেৱৰ’ বুলি কথা দিয়া সত্ত্বেও তেওঁ সহজ হ’ব পৰা নাই। “হে স্বামী, হামি দুৰ্ভাগাক কপট বাকো কত কদৰ্থনা কৰহ? যে তোহাৰ প্ৰয়াত্তমা তাহেক সমীপ চলহ। হামাত কোন প্ৰয়োজন থিক?”<sup>৩</sup> — বুলি অভিমানত ওফন্দি উঠিছে। সত্যভামাই অধৈৰ্য হৈ কৈছে —

“হে স্বামী হামাক পাৰিজাত তৰুদিতে তোহো সত্য কয়ল জানি বিলম্ব চোৰি এতিক্ষনে আনিয়া দেৱ যাৱে পাৰিজাত নাহি দেখো তাৰে বাৰি প্ৰৱেশ্যে নাহিঃ হামু সত্য কয়ে বোললো।”

শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ মুখৰ কথাত পতিয়ন যাব নোৱাৰি সন্দেহ পৰায়ণা সত্যভামাই নৰকক বধ কৰিবলৈ ওলোৱা স্বামী কৃষ্ণৰ লগতে স্বৰ্গলৈ যাবলৈ ওলাইছে। কাৰণ কৃষ্ণ বহু পত্নীক। গতিকে, এইবাৰ পাৰিজাত ফুল আনি আকৌ বা কোনজনী সতিনীক দিয়েহি সত্যভামাৰ ভয়। স্পষ্ট কথা :

“হে স্বামী, হামাৰ বহুত সতিনী। ইবাৰ পাৰিজাত আনি কোন স্ত্ৰীক দেৱ, তাহে বুঝয় নাহি। হামু কদাচিতো তোহাৰি সংগ নাহি ছোৱৰ।”<sup>৪</sup>

—সত্যভামাৰ এনে কথাত জৰিয়তে সতিনীৰ প্ৰতি থকা ঈৰ্ষাপৰায়ণ লগতে স্বামী কৃষ্ণৰ প্ৰতি থকা অভিমানৰ প্ৰকৃত স্বৰূপটো সুন্দৰকৈ প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

হৰিবংশপুৰাণ, ভাগৱতপুৰাণ আৰু বিষ্ণুপুৰাণত দেৱীসুলভ গান্ধীৰ্যৰ সলনি পাৰিজাত হৰণ নাটৰ সত্যভামা চৰিত্ৰটোৰ যোগেদি এগৰাকী মুখৰা গ্ৰাম্য নাৰী ৰূপে প্ৰতিফলিত হৈছে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত পাৰিজাত ফুলক কেন্দ্ৰ কৰি ইন্দ্ৰৰ পত্নী শচীৰ সৈতে লগা সত্যভামাৰ বাক্‌যুদ্ধখনে সত্যভামাৰ দন্দুৰী স্বভাৱটো উদঙাই দেখুৱাইছে। নাটত সত্যভামাই ইন্দ্ৰক এনেদৰে ককৰ্থনা কৰিছে যে অৱশেষত ইন্দ্ৰই সত্যভামাক ক’বলৈ বাধ্য হৈছে—

“আৱে সত্যভামা, ওহি শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণক যত পতনী থিক, তাহেক মধ্যে তুহ বৰি প্ৰচণ্ড প্ৰগলভা, ইহা হামো জানল।”<sup>৫</sup>

সত্যভামাই পাৰিজাত ফুল লৈ কৃষ্ণৰ সৈতে দ্বাৰকাপুৰী পালেহি যদিও সতিনীৰ প্ৰতি থকা বিদ্বেষ কমা নাই, বৰঞ্চ সতিনী ৰুক্মিণীক কথাৰে এখোচ মৰাৰ লোভ

সামৰিব নোৱাৰি ওচৰলৈ গৈ সগৰ্বে কৈছে —

“হে বিদৰ্ভ ৰাজ-কুমাৰী, তোহো স্বামীক বামে গোটা এক পাৰিজাত পুষ্প পাৰল, দেখু, দেখু যাৱত সেই পাৰিজাত সমূলে উভাৰি কৃষ্ণক হাতে নাহি আনল, তাৱত ছাড়লো নাহি। হামাৰ সোভাগিক মহিমা পেখো, পেখো।”<sup>৬</sup>

আকৌ, কৃষ্ণই যেতিয়া পাৰিজাত ফুলজোপাক এঠাইত ৰুবলৈ ল'লে, তেতিয়া সত্যভামাই নিজৰ ঘৰৰ দুৱাৰমুখত ৰুবলৈ কৈ এনেদৰে কৈছে —

“হে স্বামী, অঃ কি কয়ল, হামাক বহুত সতিনী থিক, পাৰিজাত পুষ্প চোৰি কৰি নিতে কত কলহ কৰি বেৰা ৰব। এথা নহে, হামাৰ দ্বাৰ নিকটে নিয়া ৰোপন কৰহ।”<sup>৭</sup>

—সত্যভামাৰ এনে উজিয়ে তেওঁৰ সতিনীৰ প্ৰতি থকা বিদ্বেষৰ প্ৰগাঢ়তাকে সূচিত কৰে। মুঠতে, জগতৰ স্বামীক পতিকাৰূপে পায়ো সন্তুষ্ট নহৈ, সামান্য পাৰিজাত এপাহক হেঁপাহ কৰা নাৰী মনৰ স্বাভাৱিক দুৰ্বলতা সত্যভামাৰ চৰিত্ৰৰ মাজেদি প্ৰকাশ পাইছে।

#### (খ) ৰুক্মিণী :

ৰুক্মিণী সত্যভামাৰ সম্পূৰ্ণ বিপৰীতধৰ্মী চৰিত্ৰ। ভাৰতীয় আদৰ্শ গৃহিণীৰ আটাইবোৰ গুণ ৰুক্মিণীৰ চৰিত্ৰত বিৰাজমান। ৰুক্মিণী ধীৰ, স্থিৰ, শান্ত, সহানুভূতিশীলা, আদৰ্শৱতী আৰু পতিভক্তিপৰায়ণা। ৰুক্মিণীৰ অন্তৰ ত্যাগ আৰু প্ৰেমেৰে সমৃদ্ধ। সত্যভামাৰ দৰে সতিনীৰ প্ৰতি বিদ্বেষ তেওঁৰ নাই। সেইদৰে ঈৰ্ষা, অসূয়া, খং, ভেম, মান-অভিমানো তেওঁৰ হৃদয়ত স্থান নাই। স্বামীভক্তি পৰায়ণা ৰুক্মিণীৰ বাবে স্বামী কৃষ্ণৰ আনন্দ লাভ আৰু তেওঁৰ চৰণ সেৱা কৰিবলৈ পোৱাটোৱে তেওঁৰ বাবে সৰ্বোত্তম সৌভাগ্য। সেয়ে পাৰিজাত ফুলক লৈ গৰ্ব মৰা সত্যভামাৰ কথাৰ বিপৰীতে ৰুক্মিণীয়ে কৈছে —

“অয়ে ভগিনী সত্যভামা, কি কহেছ, জগতক পৰম গুৰু স্বামী শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ, উনিকৰ চৰণ সেৱা কৰিতে ব্ৰহ্মাণ্ড ভিতৰে কোন দুৰ্লভ থিক।”<sup>৮</sup> কৃষ্ণৰ তুলনাত ৰুক্মিণীৰ মানত পাৰিজাত তেনেই সাধাৰণ কথা। “ধৰ্ম, অৰ্থ, কাম, মোক্ষ চাৰি পদাৰ্থ হাতে মিলারে। তোহাৰি পাৰিজাত কোন কথা?”<sup>৯</sup> ৰুক্মিণীৰ ওপৰোক্ত উক্তি সত্যভামাৰ ‘বিদৰ্ভ ৰাজকুমাৰী’ সম্বোধনৰ বিপৰীতে ‘ভগিনী’ সম্বোধন মনকৰিবলগীয়া। ইয়াত সপত্নী বিদ্বেষ নাই, নাই কোনো গৰ্বভাৱ। নাটখনত ৰুক্মিণীৰ এনে বক্তব্যই তেওঁৰ মহত্ব, সহনশীলতা, উদাৰতা আৰু পতিভক্তিৰ কথা স্পষ্ট ৰূপত তুলি ধৰিছে।

নাটখনৰ আৰম্ভণিত ৰুক্মিণীয়ে নাৰদৰ মুখে — “ওহি দেৱদুৰ্লভ পাৰিজাত যে নাৰীয়ে পৰিধান কৰে সে পুষ্পক মহিমায়ে পৰম সৌভাগিনী হয়। তাহাক ছাড়ি স্বামী

কথাৰে যাইতে নাহি।”<sup>১০</sup>

—এনেদৰে পাৰিজাত ফুলৰ মহিমা শুনি নিজে পাৰিজাত ফুলপাহ কৃষ্ণৰ পৰা খুজি লৈছে যদিও ইয়াৰ অন্তৰালত সতিনীৰ প্ৰতি সত্যভামাৰ দৰে বিদ্বেষ ভাৱ নাই। আছে নাৰীৰ স্বাভাৱিক প্ৰৱণতা। জগতৰ সকলো নাৰীৰ দৰেই স্বামীৰ ‘সৌভাগিনী’ হোৱাৰ আশাত ৰুক্মিণীয়ে মাথোন ফুলপাহৰ বাবে প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিছে —

“হে স্বামীঙ্গ হামি তোহোক প্ৰথম পতনী জানি ওহি দেৱ দুৰ্লভ পাৰিজাত প্ৰাণনাথ হামাক দেখ।”<sup>১১</sup>

—ৰুক্মিণীৰ এনে বক্তব্যৰ যোগেদি পতি ভক্তি পৰায়ণতা ৰূপটোহে প্ৰকট হৈ উঠিছে। বিদ্যাপতিয়ে বাধিকাৰ বিষয়ে দিয়া মন্তব্যৰ দৰেই শংকৰদেৱৰ পাৰিজাত হৰণৰ ৰুক্মিণীৰ প্ৰসংগতো ক’ব পাৰি— “ধনি অলপ বয়সী বালা জনি গাথৰ পুহুপমালা। খনেক দৰশনে তৃপ্তি না ভেল, বাঢ়ল মদন জ্বালা।”

এনেদৰে, ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ত ৰুক্মিণীয়ে কলা ডাৰবৰ বুকুত বিজুলী লহৰৰ দৰে ক্ষুণ্ণকৰ কাৰণে দীপ্তিমান হৈ দৰ্শক বা পঢ়ুৱৈৰ মনত গভীৰ ৰেখাপাত কৰিবলৈ সমৰ্থবান হৈছে।

#### (গ) শচী :

‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটৰ পাৰ্শ্বচৰিত্ৰ শচী দেৱৰাজ ইন্দ্ৰৰ পত্নী। অৱশ্যে, দেৱৰাজ ইন্দ্ৰৰ পত্নী হ’লেও শচীৰ চৰিত্ৰত কোনো মহত্ব নাই। পুৰাণ কেইখনৰ তুলনাত ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ৰ শচী, সত্যভামাৰ দৰে মুখৰা, অহংকাৰী, গৰ্বিতা আৰু দন্দুৰী তিৰোতা। এই ফালৰ পৰা চাবলৈ গ’লে শচী সত্যভামাৰ সমধৰ্মী চৰিত্ৰ। বিষুপুৰাণ (৫/৩০/৫১) ৰ ‘শচীচোৎ-সাহয়ামাস ত্ৰিদশাধিপতিং পতিম্’—এই সামান্য শ্লোকাংশৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰিয়ে মহাপুৰুষ জনাই ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটৰ শচী চৰিত্ৰ মূল ৰূপ ফুটাই তুলিছে।

‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটখনত শচীৰ অন্যান্য ৰূপত তুলনাত তেওঁৰ দন্দুৰী স্বভাৱটোহে অধিক উজ্বল। নাটখনত পাৰিজাত ফুলৰ সন্দৰ্ভত সত্যভামাৰ সৈতে হোৱা বাক্ যুদ্ধৰ যোগেদি তেওঁৰ মুখৰা আৰু দন্দুৰী স্বভাৱটো প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। নাটত শচীয়ে আনকি সাধাৰণ দন্দুৰী প্ৰাম্য তিৰোতাৰ দৰে কৃষ্ণক নিন্দা কৰিবলৈও এৰা নাই।

“অয়ে সত্যভামা, তোহাৰি স্বামী মাধৱক কথা হামু সৰ জানি। ওহি গোপী বিটাল গোপাল উনিকৰ আণ্ড গোকুলক স্ত্ৰী নাহি ৰহল। দেখো কংসক দাসী কুজী তাহেক হাত এৰাবল নাহি। তাহেক আৰ কি কহব? ঐচন অনাচাৰী কৃষ্ণত গৰ্ব কয়কহো হামাক পাৰিজাত নিয়া যাৱ। অঃ বজ্ৰ ধৰত সবংশে নাশ ভেলি জানৰ।”<sup>১২</sup>

শচী দেৱৰাজ ইন্দ্ৰৰ পত্নী হোৱাৰ গৰ্বত গৰ্বিতা।

সেয়ে, ইন্দ্ৰপত্নী শচীয়ে ‘মানসি সত্যভামা’ই স্বৰ্গৰ পাৰিজাত ফুল পৰিধান কৰাটো সহ্য কৰিব পৰা নাই—“হে স্বামী, তুহু বিদ্যমান থাকিতে হামাক পাৰিজাত মানুখী নিয়া যায়। অ তোহাক খিক্কাৰ থিক, বজ্জকো খিক্কাৰ বহোক।”<sup>১০</sup>

মুঠতে, শংকৰদেৱে শচী চৰিত্ৰৰ দেৱীসুলভ গাভীৰ্যৰ সলনি সাধাৰণ গ্ৰাম্য তিবোতাৰ লক্ষণহে চৰিত্ৰটোত আৰোপ কৰিছে। লোক বিনোদনৰ প্ৰতি লক্ষ্য ৰাখি শংকৰদেৱে শচী চৰিত্ৰটোক সাধাৰণ গ্ৰাম্য তিবোতাৰ শাৰীত থিয় কৰাইছে।

(ঘ) শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ :

শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটক নায়ক। পিছে নায়ক হ’লেও কৃষ্ণ চৰিত্ৰই নাটকখনত বিশেষ প্ৰাধান্য বিস্তাৰ কৰিব পৰা নাই। সত্যভামা, নাৰদ আদি চৰিত্ৰৰ তুলনাত চৰিত্ৰটো কিছু পৰিমাণে নিম্প্ৰভ হৈ পৰিছে। নাটত তেওঁৰ ভূমিকা তেনেই পুতৌলগা। তেওঁৰ যেন নিজস্ব বোলা একোৱেই নাই। কেৱল আনৰ দ্বাৰা বিশেষকৈ সত্যভামাৰ দ্বাৰা পৰিচালিত হৈ নাটত বিবিধ কাৰ্য সম্পাদন কৰিছে। অৱশ্যে কৃষ্ণ যে “জগতৰ গুৰু, যাহেৰি সজনা সয়লা সংসাৰ, ব্ৰহ্মা, মহাদেৱ বন্দিত পদপদ্ম, পৰম পুৰুষ পুৰুষোত্তম” সেই কথা ঘোষিত নোহোৱাকৈ থকা নাই। কাৰণ, মহাপুৰুষ গৰাকীৰ অংকীয়া নাট ৰচনাৰ মূল উদ্দেশ্যই আছিল ভগৱান কৃষ্ণৰ মহিমা জনসমাজত প্ৰচাৰ কৰি তেওঁৰ প্ৰতি জনসাধাৰণৰ মন আকৃষ্ট কৰি তোলা। সেয়ে নাট্যকাৰে নাটকৰ সকলোবোৰ ঘটনা এনেভাৱে সংযোজিত কৰিছে, যাতে নাটকত শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ মাহাত্ম্য বিশেষভাৱে ফুটি উঠে।

‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ত শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ দুমুখীয়া ব্যক্তিত্ব প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। এফালে পৰমব্ৰহ্মা, পৰমেশ্বৰ আনফালে এজন সাধাৰণ মানৱ। নাটখনত কৃষ্ণৰ পৰম পুৰুষত্ব ৰূপটো প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ পাইছে বিশেষকৈ নাৰদৰ মুখত। নাৰদে যেতিয়া দ্বাৰকাত উপস্থিত হ’ল, তেতিয়া কৃষ্ণই মুনিক প্ৰণাম কৰি কয় — “..... আজু হামাৰি দ্বাৰকাপুৰি পৱিত্ৰ ভেল। তোহাৰি দৰশনে হামু কৃতার্থ ভেলো।”<sup>১১</sup> তাৰ উত্তৰত যেতিয়া নাৰদে কয়, তেতিয়াই কৃষ্ণৰ পৰম পুৰুষত্ব ৰূপটো উজ্জলি উঠিছে

“হে পৰমেশ্বৰ জগত-নিবাসা।  
হামু নাৰদ তুয়া চৰণক দাস।।  
ভৰমো দশ দিশ তুৱা গুণ গায়া।  
হামাকু আণ্ড কৰসি ওহি মায়া।।  
জগত উদ্ধাৰল যাহে চৰিত্ৰ।  
তাহেক হামো কয়লি পৱিত্ৰ।।  
যাহেৰি নামে মুকুতি-পদ পাই।  
সো হৰি কৰ তুতি নতি কতি-লাই।।

তুহু জগতক গুৰু দেৱক দেৱা।

তোহাৰি চৰণে বহোক মোৰ সেৱা।”<sup>১২</sup>

নাটখনত নাৰদ মুনিকৰ দৰেই ইন্দ্ৰয়ো শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণক ‘কৌটি কৌটি ব্ৰহ্মাণ্ডেশ্বৰ’ বুলি নৰকাসুৰ অত্যাচাৰৰ পৰা উদ্ধাৰ কৰিবলৈ কাতৰ নিবেদন জনাইছে।

দেৱমাতৃ অদিতিৰ মুখতো কৃষ্ণৰ পৰম পুৰুষত্ব ৰূপটো ফুটি উঠিছে। দেৱমাতা অদিতিয়ে কুণ্ডল ঘূৰাই পোৱাৰ পাছত যেতিয়া তেওঁ কৃষ্ণক কয় —

“পৰম পুৰুষ কৰুত্ৰাণ।

তুৱা বিনে গতি নাহি আন।”<sup>১৩</sup>

আকৌ, যেতিয়া পাৰিজাতৰ কাৰণে শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ লগত যুদ্ধ কৰি ইন্দ্ৰ পৰাজিত হয়, তেতিয়া তেওঁ এইদৰে মন্তব্য দিছে —

“ওহি কোটি কোটি ব্ৰহ্মাণ্ডেশ্বৰ ব্ৰহ্মা মহেশ সেৱিত পাদ পঙ্কজ জগতৰ গুৰু নাৰায়ণ শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ তাহেক হামু যুদ্ধ হাবল, ইহাত কোন লাভ ঠিক।..... হা হা হামো পাপী মায়া মুহিত হুয়া পৰম ঈশ্বৰক যুদ্ধ কয়লো। হামাক থিকাৰ বহোক।”<sup>১৪</sup>

সেইদৰে, কৃষ্ণৰ সৈতে লগা যুদ্ধত হাৰি ইন্দ্ৰই যেতিয়া কয় — “দেখু ওহি কোটি কোটি ব্ৰহ্মামহেশ সেৱিত পাদ পঙ্কজ, জগতক পৰম গুৰু নাৰায়ণ শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ।” তেতিয়া কৃষ্ণ যে জগতৰ গুৰু পৰম ব্ৰহ্মা, মহেশ্বৰ সেই কথা বুজাত আমাৰ অকণো পলম নহয়।

অন্যহাতে, নাটখনত কৃষ্ণৰ মানৱীয় ৰূপটো প্ৰকাশ পাইছে বিশেষকৈ পত্নী ৰুক্মিণী আৰু সত্যভামাৰ সৈতে হোৱা কথা-বতৰা আৰু বিবিধ কাৰ্যৰ যোগেদি। নাটত যিজন কৃষ্ণই দেৱমাতৃ অদিতি আৰু ইন্দ্ৰৰ পৰা সেৱা-শুশ্ৰূষা লাভ কৰিছে, সেই একেজন কৃষ্ণই নাৰদে দিয়া পাৰিজাত ফুলপাহ ৰুক্মিণীৰ ‘কাতৰ বাণী’ শুনি ‘হাসি হাসি হাতে তোলি পূয়াক গৌৰৱে কোলে বৈথাই’<sup>১৫</sup> পিন্ধাই দিয়ে। নাৰদৰ মুখে সত্যভামাই অভিমান কৰি মুচ্ছা যোৱা বুলি জানিব পাৰি লৰালৰিকৈ সত্যভামাৰ ওচৰ চাপি কয় —

“হে প্ৰিয়েঙ্গ গোটা এক ফুল ৰুক্মিণীক দেলো। সে নিমিত্তে যদি অপমান কৰহ, তবে উঠহ। তোক একশত পাৰিজাত দেৱব। ..... ৰুক্মিণী, জাম্বৱতী তোহাক সম সৌভাগিনী হয় নাহিবুহু হামাৰ প্ৰাণ সম প্ৰিয়া জানি তাপ তেজহ। তোহাৰি দুখ দেখি হামাৰ হৃদয় সহয় নাহি। হে প্ৰিয়েঙ্গ হামাক শপত উঠহ উঠহ।”<sup>১৬</sup>

কৃষ্ণৰ এনে উক্তিৰে তেওঁক পৰম ভগৱানৰ পৰিৱৰ্তে সাধাৰণ মানৱৰ শাৰীলৈ লৈ গৈছে। সেইদৰে নাৰদে যেতিয়া মৃদু ভৎসনাৰ সুবত কয় —

“হে কৃষ্ণ জানলো। তুহু স্ত্ৰীকলতিকা। দেৱ



কাৰ্যাসৰ পৰি বহল, তোহাৰ ভাৰ্যাক চাতু বুলিতে সব দিবস  
গৈল।”<sup>২০</sup>

—তেতিয়া কৃষ্ণক তিবোতাৰ কথা মতে চলা  
সাধাৰণ মানুহ যেনেহে বোধ হয়। অৱশ্যে, এয়া যে মানৱী  
ৰূপত কৃষ্ণৰ লীলা মাহাত্ম্যে সেই কথা সোঁৱৰাই দি তেওঁৰ  
নাট ৰচনাৰ প্ৰকৃত উদ্দেশ্য ব্যক্ত কৰিবলৈ পাহৰা নাই।  
নাট্যকাৰে কৃষ্ণৰ এই চাৰিত্ৰিক দুৰ্বলতাক অতি কৌশলেৰে  
এইবুলি ঢাকি পেলাইছে —

“পৰম ঈশ্বৰ কৰ কাতৰ প্ৰিয়াক। দেখু অদভুত  
ভকতি মহিমা। ব্ৰহ্মা মহেস জাক কৰু সেৱা। মাথে খেড়  
মোড়ল সোহি দেৱা। কৃষ্ণকলিলা বুঝায়ে নাহি পাৰি। পুন্ন  
কাম হৰি কি কৰব নাৰি। ভকতি কয়ল হৰিক মনভোল।  
জানি কৰহ নৰ হৰি হৰি বোল।”

উল্লেখযোগ্য যে, ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটখনত  
শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ পৰম ব্ৰহ্ম পৰমেশ্বৰ ৰূপৰ তুলনাত তেওঁৰ সাধাৰণ  
মানৱীয় ৰূপটোহে বেছি আকৰ্ষণীয়।

#### (ঙ) নাৰদ :

নাৰদ পাৰিজাত হৰণ নাটৰ সকলোতকৈ  
আকৰ্ষণীয় তথা তাৎপৰ্যপূৰ্ণ চৰিত্ৰ। নাটখনত নাৰদৰ ভূমিকাৰ  
ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিয়েই নাটকীয় কাহিনীভাগ গঢ়ি তোলা  
হৈছে। নাৰদ টুটকীয়া, চতুৰ আৰু ৰসিক। তেওঁৰ বিষুৰ  
পৰমভক্ত। উপাস্য দেৱতা বিষুৰ গুণ-গান আৰু লীলা মাহাত্ম্য  
প্ৰকাশ কৰাই তেওঁৰ প্ৰধান আকাংক্ষা। ভাগৱত বা হৰিবংশত  
চিত্ৰিত নাৰদ ধীৰ, স্থিৰ আৰু পৰম ভক্ত। দেৱতাৰ দৌত্য  
কাৰ্যত তেওঁ সদায় আগৰণুৱা। ইয়াৰ বিপৰীতে অসমীয়া  
নাটকত কিন্তু নাৰদৰ টুটকীয়া আৰু কলহপ্ৰিয় ৰূপটোহে বেছি  
উজ্জল আৰু স্পষ্ট। সেয়ে, হয়তো তীৰ্থনাথ শৰ্মাই বৈষ্ণৱ  
কবিৰ নাৰদ চৰিত্ৰক অসমীয়া ‘ব’ৰ্গী ককাই’ৰ আদৰ্শত নিৰ্মিত  
বুলি মত পোষণ কৰিছে।

নাৰদ নাটখনৰ কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰিত্ৰ। নাটখনত উল্লেখ  
কৰা অনুসৰি নাৰদে ইন্দ্ৰৰ সৈতে এপাহ পাৰিজাতসহ দ্বাৰকাত  
উপস্থিত হয়। শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ সৈতে দেখা-সাক্ষাৎ হোৱাৰ পিছত  
পাৰিজাত ফুল কৃষ্ণৰ হাতত তুলি দি তেওঁ তাৰ মহিমা কীৰ্ত্তন  
কৰে —

“হে কৃষ্ণ, ওহি পাৰিজাতক গন্ধ তিনি প্ৰহৰেক  
পথ যাই। .....ওহি দেৱ দুৰ্লভ পাৰিজাত যো নাৰী পৰিধান  
কৰে, সে পুষ্পক মহিমায়ে পৰম সৌভাগিনী হয়। তাহাক  
ছাড়ি স্বামী কথায় জয়ে নাহি। অ ওহি কুসুমক মহিমা কি  
কহব।”<sup>২১</sup>

ৰুক্মিণীয়ে স্বামীৰ পৰম সৌভাগিনী হোৱাৰ  
আশাত শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণক ফুলপাহ প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰে — “হে স্বামী, হামি  
তোহাক প্ৰথম পতনী জানি ওহি দেৱ দুৰ্লভ পাৰিজাত প্ৰাণনাথ

হামাক দেহ।”<sup>২২</sup>

কৃষ্ণই ৰুক্মিণীৰ কথা পেলাব নোৱাৰি তেওঁৰ  
খোপাত ফুলপাহ মৰমেৰে পিন্ধাই দিয়ে। ইয়াৰ পিছত নাৰদ  
নৰকাসুৰে স্বৰ্গৰাজ্য উৎপাত কৰি দেৱতাসকলক অতিষ্ঠ কৰাৰ  
কথা বৰ্ণনা কৰে আৰু তাৰ পিছত দেৱতাসকলক উদ্ধাৰ  
কৰিবলৈ প্ৰাৰ্থনা জনায়। লগতে ইন্দ্ৰ আৰু শচীয়ে তেওঁত  
শৰণ লোৱাৰ কথা ব্যক্ত কৰে —

“হে কৃষ্ণ, তুহ পৰম পুৰুষ নাৰায়ণ, ভূমিক ভাৰ  
হৰণ নিমিত্তে অৱতৰিছ। সাম্প্ৰত পাপী নৰকাসুৰে দেৱতাসকলক  
বহুত দুখ লগাৱ। তন্নিমিত্ত শচী সহিত ইন্দ্ৰ দেৱতা তোহাৰি  
চৰণে শৰণ লেলহ। হে কৃষ্ণ, দেখু দেখু।”<sup>২৩</sup>

শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণই নৰকাসুৰক বধ কৰি দেৱতাসকলক উদ্ধাৰ  
কৰিব বুলি কথা দিয়াত নাৰদে ইন্দ্ৰক স্বৰ্গলৈ পঠাই দিয়ে  
আৰু শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণক নৰক বধৰ বাবে সাজু হ’বলৈ কৈ তেওঁ চেগ  
বুজি দ্বাৰকা দৰ্শনৰ কৰাৰ ছলেৰে সত্যভামাৰ কাষত উপস্থিত  
হয়গৈ। নাৰদে সত্যভামাৰ প্ৰতি শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ অৱহেলা আৰু  
ৰুক্মিণীৰ প্ৰতি গভীৰ আকৰ্ষণৰ কথা কৈ বেজাৰ কৰিবলৈ  
ধৰে। সত্যভামাই নাৰদৰ কথা একো ধৰিব নোৱাৰি “কোন  
ঠানে কি দেখল কি শুনল! হামাক শপত, সত্বে স্বৰূপ বাত  
কহ” বুলি মুনিক কাবৌ-কোকালি কৰাত অধিক ৰং চাবৰ  
মনেৰে মুনিয়ে কৈছে —

“হা হা মাৰ, কি কহব! সে সব কথা কহিতে দোষ।  
হামো দেৱ দুৰ্লভ পাৰিজাত স্বৰ্গ হস্তে আনি কৃষ্ণক হাতে  
দিলো। সে পাৰিজাত যে কুমাৰী পৰিধান কৰে সে পুষ্পক  
মহিমায়ে পৰম সৌভাগিনী হয়। ইহা জানি হামু বোলল, ওহি  
পৰিজাতক যোগ্য দেৱী সত্যভামা। তথি কৃষ্ণ কয়লি কি?  
তোহাক কটাক্ষ কৰিয়ে আপুন হাতে প্ৰিয় ৰুক্মিণীক মাথে  
পৰম সাগৰে সে দিব্য পাৰিজাত পিন্ধাৱল। আঃ তোহাক  
জীৱন ধিক ধিক। সতিনীক অভ্যুদয় দেখি কি নিমিত্তে প্ৰাণ  
ধৰহ।”<sup>২৪</sup>

নাৰদৰ কথা শুনি সত্যভামাই খঙে-বেজাৰে  
মিয়মান হৈ পৰিছে আৰু ৰোহঘৰত আশ্ৰয় লৈছেগৈ। এইবাৰ  
আকৌ ঘটনাটো অধিক উপভোগ্য কৰি তুলিবলৈ তেওঁ পুনৰ  
শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণৰ ওচৰলৈ গৈ জনাইছে—

“আহে শ্ৰীকৃষ্ণ তুহ এথা কোন সুখে বহস। সে  
প্ৰিয়া সত্যভামা পাৰিজাতক নিমিত্ত অপমানে অন্নপান সব  
ছাড়ল, পৰম তাপে মৰয়িছে। হা হা চক্ষুৱে দেখিতে কি নাপাৰ।  
দেৱ সত্বে যাৱ।”<sup>২৫</sup>

সত্যভামাৰ তেনে অৱস্থা দেখি কৃষ্ণই তেওঁক  
সান্ত্বনা বাণী শুনাইছে আৰু ‘একশত’ পাৰিজাত ফুল আনি  
দিব বুলি কথা দিছে। সত্যভামাই কৃষ্ণৰ কথা পতিয়ন যাব  
নোৱাৰি লগতে যাবলৈ বিচৰাত কৃষ্ণই নৰক বধৰ বাবে যাওঁতে

তেওঁকো লগত লৈছে। তাকে দেখি মুনিয়ে কৃষ্ণক কৈছে—

“হে কৃষ্ণ জ্ঞানল। তুহ স্ত্ৰীকলতিকা। দেৱকাৰ্য্য সব পৰি হৰল। তোহাৰ ভাৰ্য্যাক চাতু বুলিতে সব দিবস ভৈল।”<sup>২৬</sup> “হে হৰি, তুহ সম স্ত্ৰী-জিত পুৰুষ কবহো নাহি দেখি; যুদ্ধ সময়ে স্ত্ৰীক ছোড়য়ে নাহি পাৰহ। তুহ জগতক গুৰু, তোহাক যশ গাই তিনিও লোকক বেৰাওঁ। আ হামাক লাজ ভেল।”<sup>২৭</sup>

—নাৰদে এইদৰে কৃষ্ণক কৃত্ৰিম খং দেখুৱাই কোৱা কথা কেইবাৰ আমোদজনক আৰু বসিকতাৰ পৰিচায়ক।

নাটখনৰ শেষৰ ফালে নাৰদ চৰিত্ৰটোত পুনৰ টুটকীয়া ৰূপটো দেখিবলৈ পোৱা যায়। স্বৰ্গত কৃষ্ণই নৰক বধ কৰি নাৰদক পাৰিজাত আনিবলৈ পঠিয়ায়। ইন্দ্ৰই নাৰদক ফুল নিদি ফিৰাই পঠিওৱাত নাৰদে কৃষ্ণই ওচৰলৈ পুনৰ আহি ইন্দ্ৰই কৃষ্ণ আৰু সত্যভামাক কিদৰে উপলুঙা আৰু তাচ্ছিল্য কৰিছে সেই কথা অধিক ৰহন সানি কৈ এফালে কৃষ্ণ আৰু ইন্দ্ৰৰ মাজত আৰু আনফালে শচী আৰু সত্যভামাৰ মাজত বাক্ যুদ্ধখন লগায়। মুঠতে, নাট্যকাৰ শঙ্কৰদেৱে ‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ত নাৰদ চৰিত্ৰটোক টুটকীয়া, কলহপ্ৰিয় আৰু বসিক ৰূপে অংকন কৰিছে।

‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ নাটখনৰ আন আন চৰিত্ৰবোৰ হ’ল দেৱৰাজ ইন্দ্ৰ, অদিতি, ইন্দুমতী আৰু বসুমতী। নাটখনত এই আটাইকেইটা চৰিত্ৰই পাৰ্শ্ব চৰিত্ৰ আৰু আটাইকেইটা চৰিত্ৰই নিজ নিজ বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে মহিমামণ্ডিত।

## ২.০০ উপসংহাৰ :

‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ’ শংকৰদেৱৰ এখন অন্যতম নাটক। তেওঁৰ অন্য ৰচনাসমূহৰ দৰে পাৰিজাত হৰণৰ কাহিনীৰো মূল উৎস হ’ল ভাগৱত পুৰাণ। ভাগৱত পুৰাণৰ আকৌ, কৃষ্ণ চৰিত্ৰৰ লীলা প্ৰকাশক দশম স্কন্ধই হ’ল তেওঁৰ নাট্য কাহিনীৰ মূল উৎস। অৱশ্যে, কাহিনীৰ বিকাশ আৰু নাট্যকলাৰ প্ৰয়োজনৰ প্ৰতি দৃষ্টি ৰাখি মূল ভাগৱতৰ উপৰিও সমধৰ্মী গ্ৰন্থ হৰিবংশ আৰু বিষ্ণুপুৰাণৰ কথাবস্তুও ঠায়ে ঠায়ে সংযোগ কৰি নাটকীয় কাহিনী গঢ়ি তুলিছে। এই ক্ষেত্ৰত মূল ভাগৱতৰ কাহিনীক তেওঁ অকনো বিপ্লিত হ’বলৈ দিয়া নাই; তদুপৰি, কোনো স্থলতে তেওঁ ভাগৱতৰ কাহিনীৰ পৰাও সম্পূৰ্ণৰূপে আঁতৰি অহা নাই। দুয়োটা কাহিনীক সুসমন্বয়ৰ ভিত্তিত মূলতঃ ইয়াৰ কাহিনীভাগ ৰচিত। এনে কৰিবলৈ নাট্যকাৰ অকনো বিচলিত হোৱা নাই; বৰঞ্চ নাট্যকাহিনীৰ সৌন্দৰ্য্য দুগুণ বৃদ্ধিহে পাইছে। চৰিত্ৰ সৃষ্টি, সংলাপ, আংগিক আদি সকলোফালৰ পৰাই নাটখনি অনুপম। নাট্যকাৰে সেই কথা নিজেও উপলব্ধি কৰিছিল—‘পাৰিজাত হৰণ আহেৰি নাম।/ শুনা বুধজন হৰিগুণ অনুপাম (মুক্তিমঙ্গল ভটিমা, পাৰিজাত হৰণ)। উল্লেখনীয়

যে, এনে স্বাভাৱিক সৌন্দৰ্য্যৰে সমৃদ্ধ উক্ত নাটখনে আজি পাঁচশ বছৰ অতিক্ৰম কৰাৰ পাছতো মানুহৰ মাজত একেদৰে স্থান লভিবলৈ সক্ষম হৈছে। যুগ পৰিৱৰ্তন আৰু মানৱ মনৰ অভিব্যক্তিৰ পৰিৱৰ্তনেও ইয়াৰ মূল্য হ্ৰাস কৰিব পৰা নাই। ইয়াতেই নাট্যকাৰৰ সাৰ্থকতা।

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- ৪। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৫২
- ৫। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৭৫
- ৬। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৭৯-৮০
- ৭। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৮১
- ৮। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৮০
- ৯। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৮০
- ১০। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৫
- ১১। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৬
- ১২। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৬৯
- ১৩। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৬৮
- ১৪। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৭
- ১৫। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৭-৩৮
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- ১৯। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৪৭
- ২০। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৫২
- ২১। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৫
- ২২। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৬
- ২৩। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৩৮
- ২৪। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৪৩
- ২৫। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৪৫
- ২৬। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৫২
- ২৭। উল্লিখিত, পৃষ্ঠা ৫৪

## প্ৰাসংগিক গ্ৰন্থ :

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শ্ৰীমন্ত শংকৰদেৱ আৰু তেওঁৰ যুগৰ বৈষ্ণৱাচাৰ্য্যসকল,  
প্ৰকাশক—হলধৰ নাথ, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ১৯৯৩।

ভট্টাচার্য, হৰিচন্দ্ৰঃ মীয়া নাট্য সাহিত্যৰ জিলাঙনি (আদিৰ  
পৰা ১৯৬৭ পৰ্যন্ত), লয়াৰ্ছ বুক ষ্টেল।

দেৱ গোস্বামী, কেশৱানন্দঃ ভাৰতীয় পটভূমিত শঙ্কৰী সাহিত্য  
আৰু সত্ৰীয়া সংগীত, প্ৰকাশক-অনন্ত হাজৰিকা, বনলতা,  
প্ৰথম সংস্কৰণ, ২০০১।

ঐঃ অংকমালা (সম্পাদিত), প্ৰকাশক-বনলতা, ডিব্ৰুগড়।

ঐঃ শংকৰদেৱৰ নাট আৰু ভাওনা, প্ৰকাশক সাহিত্য  
অকাডেমি, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ২০১৫।

নেওগ, মহেশ্বৰ (সম্পা)ঃ সত্ৰীয়া নৃত্য আৰু সত্ৰীয়া নৃত্যৰ  
তাল, প্ৰকাশক-চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰসাদ শইকীয়া, দ্বিতীয় সংস্কৰণ, ১৯৭৫।

ঐঃ গুৰু-চৰিত-কথা, প্ৰকাশক-গুৱাহাটী বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, চন্দ্ৰ  
প্ৰকাশ, পঞ্চম সংস্কৰণ, ২০২১।

ঐঃ শ্ৰী শ্ৰী শংকৰদেৱ, প্ৰকাশক--চন্দ্ৰ প্ৰকাশ, সপ্তম  
সংস্কৰণ, ১৯৮৭ চন।

ঃ *Sankaradeva and his times, Published  
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ৰাজবংশী, পৰমানন্দঃ অসমীয়া নাট্য-সাহিত্য পৰম্পৰা আৰু  
পৰিৱৰ্তন, অসম প্ৰকাশন পৰিষদ, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ২০০৭।

শৰ্মা, সত্যেন্দ্ৰনাথঃ অসমীয়া নাট্য সাহিত্য, প্ৰকাশক-নিউ  
বুক ষ্টেল, গুৱাহাটী, দ্বিতীয় প্ৰকাশ, ১৯৬৫

শংকৰদেৱঃ পাবিজাত হৰণ নাট, প্ৰকাশক-দত্তবৰুৱা এণ্ড  
কোম্পানী, প্ৰথম প্ৰকাশ, ১৯৭৪।

বিষয় : জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ 'ৰূপালীম' নাটকৰ এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণ  
গীতাজলি বড়া  
শিৱসাগৰ

০.০০ অৱতৰণিকা :

০.০১ বিষয়ৰ পৰিচয় : অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতত 'ৰূপকোঁৱৰ' উপাধিৰে খ্যাত তথা অসমীয়া সংস্কৃতিৰ সাধক, অসমীয়া সমাজক পোহৰ পথৰ নিৰ্দেশকাৰী জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা দেৱৰ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য ক্ষেত্ৰলৈ অৱদান অপৰিসীম। প্ৰথম অসমীয়া কথাছবি (জয়মতী-১৯৩৫)ৰ নিৰ্মাতা তথা কবিতা, নাটক, উপন্যাস, গল্প, গীত-মাত আদিৰে অসমীয়া সাহিত্য ক্ষেত্ৰখনক সমৃদ্ধ কৰা জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাদেৱ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতৰ এক উজ্জ্বল ৰত্ন। আগৰৱালাদেৱে বিশ্বাস কৰিছিল- 'ৰূপান্তৰেহে জগত ধুনীয়া কৰে' সেয়ে, তেওঁ এই মূলমন্ত্ৰকে সাৰোগত কৰি নিজ কৰ্মক্ষেত্ৰত অগ্ৰসৰ হৈ অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতত নতুনত্বৰ সূচনা কৰিছিল। এই নতুনত্বৰ উৎকৃষ্ট উদাহৰণ হিচাপে আমি তেখেতৰ দ্বাৰা লিখিত নাটক সমূহৰ কথা প্ৰথমেই উল্লেখ কৰিব পাৰোঁ। অসমীয়া নাটকত পোন প্ৰথমবাৰৰ বাবে তেওঁ পুংখানুপুংখ ভাৱে 'মঞ্চ-নিৰ্দেশনা' (Settings) ৰ ধাৰণা দাঙি ধৰি অসমীয়া নাটকলৈ এক নতুনত্ব কঢ়িয়াই আনিছিল। অৱশ্যে এই কথাও সত্য যে - এওঁৰ পূৰ্বৱৰ্তী নাট্যকাৰ সকলেও নাটকত অংক বিভাজন, দৃশ্যপট সম্পৰ্কে উল্লেখ নকৰা নহয়। কিন্তু পুংখানুপুংখ ভাৱে মঞ্চ নিৰ্দেশনাৰ ধাৰণা আগবঢ়োৱা প্ৰথমজন অসমীয়া নাট্যকাৰেই হ'ল : জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা। তেখেতে নাটক সমূহত অসমীয়া সমাজৰ আপুৰুগীয়া সম্পদ স্বৰূপ চালপীৰা, বৰপীৰা, শৰাই, জাপি, যাঁতৰ আদিক মঞ্চত উপস্থাপন কৰি একোটা পৰিশীলিত - সুস্পষ্ট মঞ্চ নিৰ্দেশনাৰ আদৰ্শ দাঙি ধৰিছিল।

সংস্কৃতিৰ সাধক আগৰৱালাদেৱৰ নাটক সমূহক প্ৰধানকৈ দুটা খুলত ভাগ কৰি দেখুৱাব পাৰি। এটা হ'ল : পূৰ্ণ বা সম্পূৰ্ণ নাটক আৰু আনটো হ'ল : অপূৰ্ণ বা অসম্পূৰ্ণ নাটক। পূৰ্ণ নাটকৰ ভিতৰত - শোণিত কুঁৱৰী, কাৰেঙৰ লিগিৰী, ৰূপালীম, লভিতা, ৰূপকোঁৱৰ বা নিমাতী কইনা, খনিকৰ আদি অন্যতম। অন্যহাতেদি অপূৰ্ণ নাটকৰ ভিতৰত- সোণপখিলী, কনকলতা, সুন্দৰ কোঁৱৰ অন্যতম। পূৰ্ণ হওঁক

বা অপূৰ্ণ হওঁক আগৰৱালাদেৱৰ প্ৰত্যেকখন নাটকেই বিশেষ বিশেষ বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে ভৰপূৰ।

আমাৰ আলোচনা পত্ৰখনৰ বিষয়ৰ অন্তৰ্গত 'ৰূপালীম' আগৰৱালা দেৱৰ পূৰ্ণ ৰূপত প্ৰাপ্ত এখন জনপ্ৰিয় নাটক। নাটকখনিত 'ৰূপালীম' আৰু 'ইতিভেন'- এই দুয়োটাই কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ যদিও উক্ত আলোচনা পত্ৰখনিত কেৱল 'ৰূপালীম' চৰিত্ৰটোকহে কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে বিশ্লেষণ কৰিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে।

০.০২ পূৰ্বকৃত অধ্যয়নৰ সমীক্ষা : "জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ 'ৰূপালীম' নাটকৰ এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণ" শীৰ্ষক আলোচনা পত্ৰখনি প্ৰস্তুত কৰোঁতে কেইখন মান গ্ৰন্থত প্ৰকাশ পোৱা আগৰৱালাদেৱৰ নাটক সম্পৰ্কীয় কেইটামান আলোচনাক ইয়াৰ পূৰ্বকৃত অধ্যয়নৰ সমীক্ষা হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰা হৈছে। সেই গ্ৰন্থ কেইখন হ'ল:

- ১) ড০ প্ৰহ্লাদ কুমাৰ বৰুৱাৰ- 'জ্যোতি মনীষা'।
- ২) শৈলেনজিৎ শৰ্মাৰ- 'অসমীয়া নাট্যালোচনা'।
- ৩) প্ৰফুল্ল কুমাৰ বৰুৱাৰ- 'জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদৰ নাটক'।
- ৪) সত্যেন্দ্ৰ নাথ শৰ্মাৰ- 'অসমীয়া নাট্য সাহিত্য'।

০.০৩ অধ্যয়নৰ গুৰুত্ব : "জ্যোতি প্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ 'ৰূপালীম' নাটকৰ এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণ" শীৰ্ষক বিষয়টিৰ যথেষ্ট গুৰুত্ব আছে। যদিও নাট্যকাৰ গৰাকীয়ে আজিৰ পৰা বহু বছৰৰ আগেয়েই নাটক সমূহ ৰচনা কৰিছিল তথাপি বৰ্তমানেও এই নাটকেইখন সময় উপযোগী হৈ পৰিছে। নাট্যকাৰে সমাজৰ পৰিবেশ-পৰিস্থিতিৰ লগত চৰিত্ৰসমূহক কি দৰে খাপ-খুৱাই উপস্থাপন কৰিছে, নাটকখনৰ কোনবোৰ দিশত নাট্যকাৰে বিশেষভাৱে চকু দিছে, সমাজলৈ কি বাৰ্তা প্ৰেৰণ কৰিব বিচাৰিছে আদি বিষয়সমূহৰ বিষয়ে জনাতো অত্যন্ত দৰকাৰ। লগতে কোনবোৰ দিশত বিশেষ ভাৱে গুৰুত্ব দি নাট্যকাৰে 'ৰূপালীম'ক নাটকখনৰ অন্যতম এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে চিহ্নিত কৰিছে, সেয়া জনাতোও অত্যন্ত দৰকাৰ। এনে বিভিন্ন কথালৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিয়ে ক'ব পাৰি যে - উপৰোক্ত বিষয়টি গুৰুত্ব অপৰিসীম।

০.০৪ অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য : “জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণ” শীৰ্ষক বিষয়টো অধ্যয়নৰ উদ্দেশ্য সমূহ এনেধৰণৰ-

১) জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ নাটকসমূহৰ বিষয়ে সংক্ষেপতে অৱগত কৰোৱা।

২) জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা দেৱৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকখনৰ কাহিনী পাঠকৰ আগত দাঙি ধৰা।

৩) ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ অন্যতম এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিৰ বিশ্লেষণ কৰা।

৪) কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে ‘ৰূপালীম’ত পৰিলক্ষিত বিশেষত্ব সমূহ দাঙি ধৰা।

০.০৫ অধ্যয়নৰ পৰিসৰ : নিৰ্বাচিত বিষয়টোৰ পৰিসৰে জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাদেৱৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিৰ বিশ্লেষণৰ লগতে উক্ত চৰিত্ৰটিত পৰিলক্ষিত বিশেষত্ব সমূহক সামৰি লৈছে।

০.০৬ অধ্যয়নৰ পদ্ধতি : নিৰ্বাচিত বিষয়টোৰ সম্পৰ্কত আলোচনা কৰোঁতে বিশ্লেষণাত্মক পদ্ধতিৰ সহায় লোৱা হৈছে।

১.০০ জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ এটি চমু আলোচনা :

জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাদেৱৰ অন্যতম এখন জনপ্ৰিয় নাটক হ’ল ‘ৰূপালীম’। নাটকখনি প্ৰকাশ হৈছিল ১৯৩৮ চনত। ৰূপালীম, ইতিভেন, মায়াব, জুনাফা, মণিমুগ্ধ, ৰেণথিয়াং, ৰুকমীৰাজ আদি বিভিন্ন চৰিত্ৰৰ সমাবেশেৰে পৰিপূৰ্ণ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটক। মহৎ ট্ৰেজেডী হিচাপে জনাজাত আগৰৱালাদেৱৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকখনৰ আৰম্ভণি ঘটিছে- অসমৰ পূব সীমান্তৰ পৰ্বতীয়া এখন সমাজৰ প্ৰকৃতি সুলভ সৰল পৰিবেশত। নাটকখনত নাট্যকাৰে ৰূপালীম আৰু মায়াবৰ প্ৰেম কাহিনী প্ৰকাশৰ লগতে ৰুকমীৰাজে দেশৰ মানুহৰ প্ৰতি থকা দায়িত্ব, কৰ্তব্যৰ কথা পাহৰি কেৱল সুৰাৰ বাগিত মতলিয়াই হৈ থকাৰ দৃশ্য, ৰুকমীৰাজৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰি ভনীয়েক ইতিভেনে কৰা যুদ্ধ যাত্ৰা, মণিমুগ্ধৰ কৰলৰ পৰা ৰূপালীমক ৰক্ষা কৰি ৰুকমী জাতিৰ মান অটুট ৰাখিবৰ বাবে ইতিভেনে কৰা চেষ্টা, ত্যাগ, মণিমুগ্ধই চৰ্ত ত্যাগ কৰি ইতিভেনৰ পৰিবৰ্তে ৰূপালীমক হৰণ কৰাৰ বাবে ৰূপালীমৰ প্ৰতি তেওঁৰ মনত উদয় হোৱা ঈশা; এই ঈশাৰ বলতেই ৰূপালীমক শেষত ৰুকমী জাতিৰ অসতী বুলি পুৰি হত্যা কৰা- এই সকলো বিলাক কথা নাটকখনিত স্পষ্টকৈ প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। নাটকখনৰ কাহিনীয়ে ৰূপালীমৰ মৃত্যুৰ খবৰ ব্যক্ত কৰিছে যদিও নাটকখনৰ পৰিণতিত ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিৰ মাজেদি এক চৰম সত্য প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। সেয়া হ’ল- ৰূপালীমে নিজৰ দেহ মণিমুগ্ধক দান নকৰাকৈয়ে মণিমুগ্ধই নিজৰ হেৰুৱা জ্ঞান ঘূৰাই পাইছে অৰ্থাৎ ৰূপালীমৰ যোগেদি মণিমুগ্ধৰ জ্ঞান

চকু মুকলি হৈছে।

সংক্ষেপতে এয়াই হ’ল ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ কাহিনী।  
২.০০ জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালাৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ বিশ্লেষণ :

জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা দেৱৰ দ্বাৰা লিখিত সকলো বিলাক নাটকৰ ভিতৰত মহৎ ট্ৰেজেডী হিচাপে জনাজাত ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকখনৰ বিভিন্ন দিশ সমূহলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিলে নাটকখনিত ‘ৰূপালীম’ আৰু ‘ইতিভেন’ নামেৰে দুটা নাৰী চৰিত্ৰক কেন্দ্ৰীয় ৰূপত দেখা যায়। দুয়োটাই নাটকখনৰ কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ যদিও মোৰ এই আলোচনা পত্ৰখনিত ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিৰ হে বিশ্লেষণ দাঙি ধৰিবলৈ প্ৰয়াস কৰা হৈছে।

২.০১ ৰূপালীম : জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা দেৱৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হ’ল ‘ৰূপালীম’। নাটকখনিত ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটি প্ৰধানকৈ উজ্জ্বলি উঠিছে- প্ৰেম-ভালপোৱা আৰু ত্যাগৰ প্ৰতীক ৰূপে।

মায়াব হ’ল ৰূপালীমৰ প্ৰেমিকা। প্ৰেমিক মায়াবৰ প্ৰতি ৰূপালীমৰ অকৃত্ৰিম প্ৰেমৰ উমান পোৱা যায়- নাটকখনৰ চতুৰ্থ অংকত। মণিমুগ্ধই যেতিয়া ৰূপালীমৰ আগত তেওঁক ভালপোৱাৰ কথা ব্যক্ত কৰিছে, তেতিয়া ৰূপালীমে তেওঁৰ প্ৰেমিক মায়াবৰ প্ৰতি থকা প্ৰেম সম্পৰ্কত যি স্বীকাৰোক্তি প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে, সেয়া যেন দৰাচলতে সকলো নাৰীৰ অন্তৰত পুৰুষৰ প্ৰতি খোদিত হৈ থকা ভালপোৱাৰ এক আকৃতি। ৰূপালীমৰ দৰে প্ৰত্যেকগৰাকী প্ৰেমিকাই বা নাৰীয়েই নিজৰ প্ৰিয়জনক প্ৰাণ ভৰি ভাল পায়, কোনো কাৰণতে নিজৰ প্ৰিয় জনক নিজৰ পৰা আঁতৰি যাবলৈ নিদিয়। অন্যথা ইয়াৰ অলপমান হেৰুৱে হ’লেই নাৰী প্ৰবল ঈৰ্ষা পৰায়ণ হৈ উঠে। ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিৰ ঈৰ্ষা পৰায়ণতা দেখা গৈছে- নাটকখনৰ প্ৰথম অংকত, যেতিয়া ৰূপালীমে দেখা পাইছে- মায়াবই তাৰ পেঁপাটোক বৰকৈ আদৰ কৰিছে। মায়াবই নিজৰ পেঁপাটোক মৰম কৰা দেখি ৰূপালীম খঙত জ্বলি উঠিছে, সেয়ে ৰূপালীমে মায়াবৰ পৰা পেঁপাটো লৈ শিলত থেকেচি ভাঙি পেলাইছে। পেঁপাটোৰ প্ৰতি থকা ভালপোৱাই যাতে মায়াবৰ ৰূপালীমৰ প্ৰতি থকা মৰম ভালপোৱাক কোনো ৰকমে হ্ৰাস কৰিব নোৱাৰে- এয়া যেন তাৰেই প্ৰতিফলন। ৰূপালীমৰ এই ঈৰ্ষা পৰায়ণতা কেৱল ৰূপালীমৰ নহয়, সমগ্ৰ নাৰী সমাজৰে ঈষাপৰায়ণতা।

‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিলৈ ভালদৰে লক্ষ্য কৰিলে দেখা যায় যে ৰূপালীমৰ ভালপোৱা বহুখা বিভক্ত। তেওঁৰ ভালপোৱাই প্ৰেমিক মায়াবৰ লগতে পিতৃ জুনাফা, নিজৰ দেশৰ জনতা আৰু মায়াবই হত্যা কৰা বাঘজনীৰ পোৱালী কেইটাকো স্পৰ্শ কৰিছে। ৰূপালীমৰ হৃদয় মাতৃ মমতাৰে

ভৰপূৰ। সেয়ে মায়াব'ই বাঘজনীক হত্যা কৰাত বাঘজনীৰ পোৱালী কেইটাৰ কথা চিন্তা কৰি ৰূপালীমে কৈছে-

“ৰূপালীমঃ বাৰু মায়াব’। পিছে বাঘৰ পোৱালি  
- কিটাও তুমি আনিবা দেই। মই  
সিহঁতক খাবলৈ দিম, নহ’লে সিহঁতে  
অকলে

অকলে হাবিত কান্দি-কান্দি ঘূৰি ফুৰিব।  
আনিবা দেই।” ১

কিন্তু জন্তুৰ প্ৰেমত মগ্ন হৈ থকাৰ অৱস্থাতেই ৰূপালীমৰ বাঞ্জিত সকলো আশা আকাংক্ষা ধূলিসাৎ কৰি দিলে- মণিমুগ্ধৰ উপস্থিতিয়ে। মণিমুগ্ধৰ কবলত পৰি ৰূপালীমে নিজৰ জীৱনৰ গতি সলনি কৰিবলৈ বাধ্য হ’ল। ৰূপালীম মণিমুগ্ধৰ কাৰেঙৰ আলহী হ’ব লগা হ’ল যদিও মণিমুগ্ধই কোনো গুণেই ৰূপালীমৰ মন টলাব নোৱাৰিলে। অৱশ্যে ৰূপালীম চৰিত্ৰটিৰ ক্ৰিয়াশীলতা লক্ষ্য কৰা যায়- নাটকখনৰ চতুৰ্থ অংকত, যেতিয়া মণিমুগ্ধই ৰূপালীমক ধৰিবলৈ আহিছিল, তেতিয়া ৰূপালীমে খিৰিকীয়ে জাঁপ মাৰি পলাই গৈছিল। নাটকখনৰ পঞ্চম অংকত, ৰূপালীমে মায়াব’ৰ সৈতে পলাই থকা অৱস্থাত আগন্তুক বিপদৰ সংকেত পাই মায়াব’ক পলাই যাবলৈ কোৱাত প্ৰেমিকাৰ প্ৰতি থকা অপ্ৰাণ ভালপোৱা প্ৰকাশ পাইছে। নিজ পিতৃ, দেশৰ বন্দী জনতা আৰু প্ৰেমিক মায়াব’ৰ জীৱনৰ কথা ভাবিয়েই ৰূপালীমে অৱশেষত জীৱনৰ সবাতোকৈ নিকাৰণ সত্যটো মানি ল’বলৈ বাধ্য হৈছে-

“তুমি কি কৰিবলৈ কোৱা মই তাকে কৰিম। মই  
তাকে কৰিম। সিহঁতক এৰি দিয়া। সিহঁতক এতিয়াই এৰি  
দিয়া।” ২

ৰূপালীমৰ এই মহানতাৰ বাবেই ৰূপালীম আজিও  
ত্যাগৰ জলন্ত প্ৰতিমূৰ্তি।

ৰূপালীমৰ সুগভীৰ প্ৰেম আৰু ত্যাগৰ ভাল পোৱাই  
‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটোক কেৱল এটা কালোত্তীৰ্ণ চৰিত্ৰত পৰিণত  
কৰাই নহয়, মণিমুগ্ধৰ জ্ঞান-চকু মুকলি কৰিবলৈও সক্ষম  
হৈছিল। ৰূপালীমৰ মনৰ স্বচ্ছতা আৰু প্ৰেম-ত্যাগৰ মহত্বই  
মণিমুগ্ধৰ মনৰ অন্ধকাৰ দূৰ কৰিছিল। যাৰ পৰিণতিত মণিমুগ্ধই  
অৱশেষত ঘোষণা কৰিছিল- “ৰূপালীম! ক্ষমা কৰিবা। যোৱা  
তুমি মুক্ত।” ৩

নাটকখনৰ যৱণিকাত দেখা যায় যে- ৰূপালীমক  
অসতী বুলি ভাবি সমগ্ৰ ৰুক্মী জাতিয়ে জ্বলাই দিছে। প্ৰকৃততে  
ৰুক্মী জাতিৰ এই সিদ্ধান্ত সত্য নাছিল, ৰূপালীম অসতী  
হোৱাৰ বিপৰীতে ৰূপালীম হ’ল সমগ্ৰ ৰুক্মী জাতিৰ বাবে  
আদৰ্শস্বৰূপ এক ত্যাগৰ মূৰ্তি।

উপৰোক্ত দিশসমূহলৈ লক্ষ্য কৰিয়েই ক’ব পাৰি

যে- ‘ৰূপালীম’ ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ অন্যতম এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয়  
নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ।

৩.০০ কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিও  
পৰিলক্ষিত বিশেষত্ব সমূহঃ

জ্যোতি প্ৰসাদ, আগৰৱালাদেৱৰ অন্যতম নাটক  
‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ অন্যতম এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ ‘ৰূপালীম’  
চৰিত্ৰটি বিভিন্ন বিশেষত্বৰে ভৰপূৰ। সমগ্ৰ নাটকখনতে  
‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটি প্ৰেম আৰু ত্যাগৰ প্ৰতীক ৰূপে জিলিকি  
থকা পৰিলক্ষিত হৈছে।

‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটোৰ যোগেদি প্ৰেমিক মায়াব’ৰ  
প্ৰতি থকা প্ৰেম, পিতৃ, ৰুক্মী জাতিৰ তথা দেশক ৰক্ষা কৰিবৰ  
বাবে নিজৰ সতীত্বক মণিমুগ্ধৰ হাতত সমৰ্পণ কৰা মনোভাৱ,  
সতীত্ব নষ্ট নকৰাকৈয়ে মণিমুগ্ধৰ জ্ঞান চকু মুকলি কৰাব  
সামৰ্থ্য আদি ফুটি উঠিছে। ৰূপালীমৰ প্ৰেম, স্বদেশ প্ৰেম,  
পোহৰ পথৰ সন্ধানকাৰী আদি ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটিৰ উজ্জ্বল  
বিশেষত্ব। ৰূপালীমৰ এই প্ৰেম প্ৰেমিক, মায়াব, পিতৃ জনাফা  
দেশৰ জনতাৰ লগতে মায়াব’ই হত্যা কৰা বাঘজনীৰ পোৱালি  
কেইটাৰ প্ৰতি। নিজৰ অনিচ্ছা সত্ত্বেও মণিমুগ্ধৰ হাতত নিজক  
সপি দি প্ৰেমিক, পিতৃ আৰু দেশৰ বন্দী জনতাক মুক্ত কৰিব  
বিচৰা কাৰ্যই ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটোক ত্যাগৰ এক জ্বলন্ত প্ৰতিমূৰ্তি  
হিচাপে তুলি ধৰিছে। সেইদৰে মণিমুগ্ধৰ জ্ঞান চকু মুকলি  
কৰা কাৰ্যই ৰূপালীমৰ মনৰ স্বচ্ছতা আৰু প্ৰেম-ত্যাগৰ মহত্বক  
জিলিকাই তুলিছে।

এনেদৰে ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটি বিভিন্ন বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে  
ভৰপূৰ হৈ থকা দেখা যায়।

৪.০০ উপসংহাৰঃ

অসমীয়া সাহিত্য জগতক নিজৰ সাহিত্যৰাজিৰে  
চহকী কৰি তোলা সাহিত্যিক জ্যোতি প্ৰসাদ আগৰৱালা দেৱ  
অসমীয়া সাহিত্য-জগতৰ এক উজ্জ্বল ৰত্ন। অন্যান্য  
সাহিত্যৰাজিৰ লগতে তেওঁৰ দ্বাৰা লিখিত নাটক সমূহে  
অসমীয়া নাট্যজগতক বিশেষভাৱে এক মাত্ৰা প্ৰদান কৰিছে।  
তেখেতৰ প্ৰত্যেকখন নাটকেই সুকীয়া সুকীয়া বৈশিষ্ট্যৰে  
সমুজ্জ্বল। তেখেতৰ অন্যতম এটি কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী হ’ল-  
‘ৰূপালীম’। ‘ৰূপালীম’ নাটকৰ কাহিনী, চৰিত্ৰ-সৃষ্টি, সংলাপ,  
পৰিবেশ-পৰিস্থিতি আদি সকলো দিশতে নাটকখনি আটক  
ধনীয়া। ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটোক কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে  
নাট্যকাৰে বৰ সুন্দৰকৈ তুলি ধৰিছে। মোৰ এই আলোচনা  
পত্ৰখনিত সংক্ষিপ্ত ৰূপতহে ‘ৰূপালীম’ চৰিত্ৰটোক নাটকখনিৰ  
অন্যতম কেন্দ্ৰীয় নাৰী চৰিত্ৰ হিচাপে আলোচনা কৰা হৈছে।  
পৰৱৰ্তী কালত এই বিষয়টিৰ বিস্তৃত আলোচনাৰ  
প্ৰয়োজনীয়তা আছে।

পাদটীকাঃ

- ১) ড০ হীৰেন গৌহাই (সম্পাদনা) : জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ ৰচনাৱলী, অষ্টম সংস্কৰণ, জানুৱাৰী ২০১৩, পৃঃ ২০৮
  - ২) হীৰেন গৌহাই (সম্পাদনা) : জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ ৰচনাৱলী, সপ্তম পৰিৱৰ্তিত সংস্কৰণ ২০০৭, পৃঃ ১২৯
  - ৩) হীৰেন গৌহাই (সম্পাদনা) : জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ ৰচনাৱলী, সপ্তম পৰিৱৰ্তিত সংস্কৰণ ২০০৭, পৃঃ ১৩১
- গ্ৰন্থপঞ্জী :
- ১) গৌহাই, হীৰেন গৌহাই (সম্পাদনা) : জ্যোতিপ্ৰসাদ ৰচনাৱলী, সপ্তম পৰিৱৰ্তিত সংস্কৰণ ২০১৭
  - ২) বৰুৱা, প্ৰহ্লাদ কুমাৰ : জ্যোতি-মনীষা, পঞ্চম প্ৰকাশ জানুৱাৰী, ২০১৫
  - ৩) শৰ্মা, সত্যেন্দ্ৰনাথ : অসমীয়া সাহিত্যৰ সমীক্ষাত্মক ইতিবৃত্ত
  - ৪) শৰ্মা, সত্যেন্দ্ৰনাথ : অসমীয়া নাট্য সাহিত্য, পুনৰ মুদ্ৰণ ২০০২