

Depection of progressive attitude in Dr.Birendra kumar Bhattacharya's story 'Kolong ajiyo Boi' : An Analytical study

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Abstract:

An eminent story writer of the Ramdhenu era, Dr. Birendra kumar Bhattacharya provided an immense storehouse of discoveries to the Assamese literature. his role as the editor of the milestone Assamese literary journal along with his active participation led to the formation of the golden era. Dr.Bhattacharya was a prominent story writer who was a prominent story writer, who was aware of the society and the ideal of most of his works was social reality. He was alert and vehemently opposed social injustice and corruption. There is a clear and detailed depiction of socio-political aspects in his stories. In the same way ,Dr.Bhattacharya was deeply influenced by socialism and following Marxist ideology, he also dreamt of reforming the society. And the same gets aptly reflected in his stories.

Dr.Bhattacharya's ' kolong Ajiyo Boi' was a notable story. the urge to achieve independence and at the same time shattered dreams had been taken as the back drop of his story. but independence was unable to reform the poverty stricken lives of Thogiram and Sonpahi. Rise in revenue system and increasing price of commodities had totally devastated their lives even after independence. It was true that their dreams shattered, but they didn't accept failure. Independence of the farmers ,right to property and getting rid of revenue system became their primary objectives in order to attain their absolute independence. It is a fact that the primary objective of progressive literature is to create a harmonious sociable society, with equal rights. The indomitable spirits of Sonpahi and Thogiram were determined enough for a human movement in order to create a harmonious society. And altogether we get a glimpse of the progressive spectrum that the story tries

to ponder at. Therefore, in this paper ,a prompt attempt has been made in order to analyse the possible progressive attitude that the prescribed story tries to depict.

Keywords : *Progressive , humanities, dream, right, swaraj, independence etc.*

I. Introduction

Dr. Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya (1925-1997) is undoubtedly the Pioneering personality in modern Assamese literature. He left behind him an ample storehouse of resources dedicated to assamese literature. Dr. Birendra kumar Bhattacharya was at the same time a novelist, poet, story writer, essayist ,playwright, critic, etc. His poetry, novels, short stories and whatever he created aptly bags his excellence.

Dr. Bhattacharya was associated with many national associations and institutions. He was the president of Indian Writers' Association ;member of "Institute of Gandhian Thought And Peace Studies" in Allahabad University; Honoraray member of Gauhati University; member of Regional Advisory Committee; member of editorial Advisory Committee For Man And Development; members of national jury ;apart from being a faculty of Assamese Department in Gauhati University , he was also the member of University Grants Commission; member of Indian International Centre; had soviet tour as being the leader of Indian Native Writers' Group; member of Raja Rammohan Rai Foundation etc. Apart from all these, he also had the privilege of being the president of Axom Sahitya Sabha in 1988.

Starting his initial literary career with a collection of Poetry, Dr. bhattacharya wrote twenty-one novels, at least sixty short stories, hundred and fifty songs and poems, many biographies and translated texts, above hundred plays and over one thousand articles written over a variety of subjects. Although Dr. Bhattacharya achieved popularity amongst the study fraternity as a novelist, he also had a significant place in the world of Assamese short story writing. His first story 'Mahi aair xador' was published in the magazine 'jeuti' in the year 1937. with the publication of the story 'Morohi pora jibon' in the magazine 'cottonian' in the year 1947, there were consecutive publications of his stories in various magazines.

In modern Assamese literature, the magazine 'Ramdhenu' (1952-1963), edited by Dr. Bhattacharya paved the path for a new era. The topic adopted for discussion in the magazine "Ramdhenu" were diverse ranging from the complicated mentality of independence and revolution, importance on national thought and execution, various comparative literary studies etc. it is noteworthy as Dr. Hiren Gohain stated regarding the magazine "Ramdhenu" that: 'his significant role conferred great honours to "Ramdhenu"'. It is due to the editorship of Dr. Bhattacharya that changed the culture of modern story writing and thereby bringing a revolution in our literature too'.

Similarly, Homen Borgohain stated that 'with the publication of "Ramdhenu" under the aegis of Dr. Bhattacharya in the year 1951, there is the beginning of the most fruitful decade in the revolutionary era of modern Assamese literature'.

Dr. Bhattacharya, being a man of revolutionary spirit, usually wrote about diverse subjects which included socialism, humanity, sympathizing the destitute, designing the self in hours of danger, attraction towards materialism and a lot more. In order to depict social change and human mobility, he adequately portrayed revolution and satyagraha in his works. His works deemed him a crucial identity of being an obligatory creator in the history of Assamese literature. Taking social reality as his ideal, Dr. Bhattacharya, through his works, struggled against corruption, the helpless-discriminated neglected sections of society. He staunchly stood against social injustice and corruption.

In the story 'kolong ajiyo boi' the exploited and the discriminated stood together in order to uproot the center of their misery the British colonizers. In order to execute their struggle, they were at the zenith of their sacrifice. Apart from attaining swaraj, the writer still struggles to see how the rich exploited and discriminated the poor, how the poor were being abandoned. A firm believer in Marxism, Dr. Bhattacharya dreamt of organizing a harmonious society. Being a desperate writer, he always thought for the welfare of the society and how the poor and the exploited people could be emancipated from the anguish of the difficult time. He always wanted an exploitation free society. Henceforth, through his story 'kolong ajiyo boi', he wanted to portray a healthy and exploitation free society.

II. study methodology

An analytical approach is being undertaken in order to discuss the subject.

2.01 Integration of resources: primary resources as well as secondary resources are integrated in order to discuss the subject.

III. Analysis of the subject:

A. the plot of the story 'kolong ajiyo boi'

Dr. Bhattacharya, being a proactive personality, was equally aware with the struggle of the various sections of society and hence most of his stories bears the depiction of various circumstances. His writings always revolved around the general people and have notes. And perhaps that is why most of his stories bears the anguish of the general people. As a matter of fact, his 'kolong ajiyo boi' is a purposeful short story. The story was published under the editorship of Dr. Maheswar Neog in 'Ramdhenu'.

The story kolong ajiyo boi is centered around the life of Thogiram and Sonpahi and at the same time the plot is taken as the backdrop for the depiction of different life styles of the general people. Thogiram spent three scores and eight years of his life along the banks of the river kolong. The dwellers along the river shares an innate relationship with the river. The natives bathe themselves in the morning. By evening the mud pots get filled and during mid day the air gets filled with livering melodies from the past. And

on one such beautiful day, Thogiram or swearing the mighty river ,married the most beautiful Sonpahi. Together they spent two scores and 45 autums along the banks of the kolong. But none the river could never be theirs. And one day the river changed its colours. The freezing water of the kolong brought death to its dwellers. Thogiram's father, brother and many more people died due to cholera. everywhere there were cries and pain of losing the loved ones.at the same time,an hired person of the mouzadar took away Thogiram's pair of Manipuri bullocks due to lapse in revenue payment. This added to Thogiram's misery. How will he farm without the bullocks? His anguish led to his revolutionary spirit.

Dr. moni bora was an angel in the lives of Thogiram. He lent money to Thogiram for rescuing the bullocks. but he was able to farm only for one year. Because the next disaster was flood. Thogiram took Sonpahi and his family to a steep land in order to avoid flood water. later, all the villagers joined Thogiram and his family. At that time, Dr.Moni Bora relieved the villagers by providing them with food and other eatables.

The lives of the villagers became miserable, but even though they had to pay revenues to their masters. The hired person began knocking at the doors of the villagers even when they are unable to stabilize their situation. he snatched away every possible valuables, starting from jewellery to livestock, etc. once again he took away Thogiram's pair of bullocks .he totally devastated the village. The conditions of the villagers was such because the nation was ruled by the colonizers. Anyhow swarj has to be implemented. According to Dr. Bora's instruction Thogiram was ready to fight. The movement for Swaraj took away the lives of Thogiram's son and daughter in-law along with Dr.Bora's son and five more. But the must awaited independence was unable to bring any change in the lives of Thogiram and Sonpahi. even after independence, there is no happiness in Thogiram's life. Revenue did not decrease and hike in price completely devastated the lives of the poor. the extortion of the landowners remained the same, the Kabulis looted the poor and land were auctioned. But Thogiram was not disheartened . he firmly stood along with his folk, pledged to continue his struggle for pure independence with hundreds and thousands of people, believed to restore his shattered dreams. For them, their primary focus were independence of the farmers, right to land

and property and getting rid of revenue. the indomitable spirits of Thogiram and Sonpahi were determined to struggle their best and this determination show brightly in their bimming eyes. they awaited for a new day. this is the plot of the story of Thogiram and Sonpahi barely outlined. Being a socially aware writer ,Dr.bhattacharya;s 'kolong ajio Boi'is based on social reality which aptly bears the definition of time. The revolutionary spirit that defined the society had been taken by the writer as the symbol of the mighty kolong. there is a strong opposition against the political arrangement that undergoes within the story. there is a truth that the writers bravely tried to portray and it was that when each citizen of a nation does not become economically self efficient, independence in a true sense becomes valueless, meaningless.

IV. Progressive literature: progressivism is the support for or advocacy of social reform. prograssive ideas leads to change and development in society and henceforth progression always gains momentum and does not tends to depend on thought process. Since time immemorial there is evolution in economics, socio-politicio-cultural spectrum and hence there is also change in literary genre. intellectuals tried to disseminate progressiveness as something that tried to reach its perultimate focus passing through endless changes. in order to be meaningful literature, it has to be progressive. in other words, it can be said that which renders mobility to society can be termed as progressive literature. the literature which abandons any form of obligations and paves the path for a new tomorrow, a new age can be eventually termed as progressive literature ,meaningful literature. The clauses of Marxist literature have been termed also as progressive, leftist, communist, revolutionary, socialist etc. Marxism was propaganded by german philosophers karl marx and friedrich engels. the clauses of Marxism are used by the philosophers in order to discuss and critize literature with regards to the theories of society, economics and politics of time. economics had been always the basis of Marxism. according to Marxism, literature is never the creation of self consciousness. literature is created out of any historical condition or that which had great historical impact upon the age. Social realism can be defined as related to Marxist progressivism where there is a portrayal of the society, of the lives of the general sections of people. the exploited, the discriminated and the hypocrisy of the

capitalists along with their sabotages gets highlighted in such literary genre. and along with all these, the revolutionary voices of the exploited people also gets incited. It had been believed world wide that the ultimate objective of progression must be liberation human liberation –liberation from every sort of bonding for the creation of a purposeful life. And every humanist affirms that liberation is the only basis of liberation for humanity.

The main objective of progressive literature is to confer sufficiency, prosperity and happiness to life. But this life is not only personal ,this is the pristine and divine life. be it this is the pristine and divine life is not possible in today's socially stratified society, as there had always been class divisions among the rich and the poor that will forever continue. this division and discrimination had led to greed, enmity, hatred, fear, terrorism, oppression, anger, genocide, destruction etc. one who had the zeal of revolution in their hearts, becomes classless, distinctionless and truncated from society. and this truncated occurs not only through society but also through literature and culture which they utilize for creating a new world order. and this new world order will be the most desired form of socialist society. The magazine Jayanti had a significant role in the birth and development of progressive literature in modern Assamese literature. in the year 1943, under the editorship of Bhabananda Dutta and Kamal Narayan Jayanti made distinctive changes in Assamese literature which in turn led to the flourishing publications of Marxist and progressive literary works. after this ,the magazine 'Posuwa' also made significant developments in progressive literature. in the same way, slowly and steadily progressive attitude made its way for further development in Assamese literature. Bhabananda Dutta ,Amulya Baruah ,Dhiren Dutta, Chakreshwar Bhattacharya etc. wrote poetry according to Marxist ideology .with poetry, the progressive attitude also made its way into novels and stories. the primary objective of progressive literature was to take along the consciousness of the working class.

A. Reflection of progressive attitude in the story:

Dr. Bhattacharya was one among many who consciously created literature following Marxist ideology. in our social structure change and liberation

of the working class is impossible without revolutionary zeal and that is why our literature had always tried to give a believable and warm depiction of the revolutionary spirit and revolutionary ideology through their works. Dr. Bhattacharya wrote many stories following Marxist socialism. Amongst them, "Kolong Ajo Boi" is a notable meaningful progressive short story. An humble attempt is made in order to show how progressive attitude is being reflected in the short story.

Dr. Bhattacharya was not Marxist, but his writings bore an in-depth impact of political consciousness. He was a profound literature who believed in rationality, humanity and was sensitive. Since time immemorial there had been class division in society. the capitalists, masters, zamindars, workers, farmers, labourers together live in a particular society. but living together there had always been discrimination amongst themselves. And due to this discrimination, there had been continuous struggle amongst the classes. according to Marx, "Every class struggle is a political struggle". And Dr. Bhattacharya wanted to get rid of these class discrimination. "swaraj is our birth right"—are the mighty words of Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak. And this is not a possession that had to be conferred to us. therefore in order to gain our birth right, we need struggle, revolution, keeping aside every division in caste, color and creed. but this struggle was meant to be non-violent. Dr. Bhattacharya followed every footstep of Gandhi's non violent policy. because according to Dr. Bhattacharya, nothing can be achieved through violence.

Dr. Bhattacharya, while characterizing the story of a "Kolong Ajo Boi", stood beside Thogiram through the story , the writer tried to depict the barbaric picture of the stratified classes through communist rationality. he also incited the classes to raise their voices against exploitation Thogiram's hopefulness had been deprived in the story. In an instance, Thogiram stated that : 'Our pretty old ladies contributed their blood for the novel cause. now its time for our blood to die for the cause, come lets get pledged either do or die...' Thogiram's words powerfully signify the most desired progressive consciousness of modern society. The exploitation and deprivation of the colonizers had shaped the rebellious and revolting Thogiram. The story portrays honour and sympathy for the working class and hatred for the exploiting class. Thogiram himself stated that 'If today you don't abolish the foreigners, what will you eat

tomorrow? Dr.Father, there is no other option to fight them back .we can't die in misery. Tell us what to do.not only me ,but my entire family will fight back.

The character of the Doctor in the story had been taken as a symbol of progression. He excited and instigated Thogiram for swaraj and he himself supported the novel cause with all his might. His progressive words are noteworthy when he stated that ‘ we need to accomplish the task that remained undone by our children. I don't know about others ,but I shall fight for swaraj until I die... we need to congregate for swaraj...here ,on the banks of the kolong, beside the ground for the martyrs. We must congregate .the rich ruled our nation for three years. the poor remained voiceless.but this time we shall be victorious. every enemy need to be abolished.’ From time to time ,the labour class kept struggling for a classless and exploitation free society. Manoeuvrability and futuristic approach is the basis of progressivism . on the story , probability had been shown regarding a new swaraj. Towards the end of the story, everybody had been shows taking pledge in the martyr ground.Swaraj will continue until the farmers attain independence, until the total abolishment of revenue system.our rebellion shall continue until we don't get sufficient food to sustain .we shall sincerely try to accomplish the task left undone by our parents, sisters and brothers.

The writer is optimistic that one day classless and exploitation free communist society would be created. that is why Thogiram repeatedly fought.and he too found a hope. Social revolution was the basis of the story.the kinsman of Thogiram were repeatedly exploited by the zamiders and Mahajans and they were devastated due to the payment of the revenues. Thogiram's revolutionary thought was such that, ‘ The revenue for two years is two scores and ten.in lieu of that why will the mauzadar take the pair of bullocks? Why? He is unable to understand the tactics behind the governance. ’The writer was supportive and sympathizes with the exploited and the discriminated. The writer rightly realized that without organized opposition and class struggle injustice cannot be abolished.the doctor spoke that inorder to attain swaraj,all the dwellers along the kolong river need to organize themselves need to be united.

The socialist revolution that awake Thogiram and his folk against the exploitation of the rich aptly justifies the saying either do or die. the words beautifully signified the revolutionary zeal that awoke

them. The governance of the colonizers had made the lives of the common people unbearable to sustain and it had already been discussed in the story how Thogiram and his folk tried their best to abolish the foreigners. By the end due to lack of material benefits, oppression and exploitation, Thogiram and many like him had to beg for their survival. At times,they even had to live without eating marx's idea of economics being at the base of sustainability sets fully justified in these circumstances. the humble villagers at the banks of the kolong used to eat happily, live happily together but the capitalist system of society brought complexity and artificiality that altogether altered their pattern of life. The Indians however were unable to achieve their desired swaraj. According to Dr.Bhattacharya, political independence is not pure independence .he stated that ‘ independence is not ours, does not belong to people, independence is for the rich the poachers, the masters, the zamidars.’ Innumerable people ahead rivers of blood for independence, but all went in vain. The people thought after attaining independence-‘ the neverness would be abolished, prices of life stocks would decrease, prices of food and clothing would be minimized and we would be able to farm as per our ability. But Thogiram's struggle for swaraj was not beneficial. Dr. Bhattacharya clearly stated that the independence of the farmers was independence in true sense. Independence should provide the deprived, the destitute, the exploited their true liberation.and for this everybody should bravely follow the path of revolution. according to Dr.Bhattacharya: ‘ swaraj is the courage to work. Removing fear from one's self and performing one's duty is swaraj. Independence of the soul and mind is absolute.’ The writer demonstrated that the culmination of exploitation was possible only through swaraj. It was not possible only through swaraj. It was not sufficient to showcase the exploitation and oppression of the working class and writers knew that even he could never bring the culmination. Because for the culmination of exploitation, one should be aware of its pathway. in this instance, Dr.Bhattacharya achieved success. And that was why the story can be said to be a meaningful progressive piece of literature. And the path demonstrated by Dr.Bhattacharya had been accepted by all .and hence new and fresh dreams began chasing the lives of Thogiram and his folk. The story, towards its end, provided hints of futurism, which meant that distinction, exploitation, oppression would be abolished in the future and a new world order of communism

would be established. And it clearly got reflected in Thogiram's determination.

V. Conclusion :

Dr.Bhattacharya never supported communalism but in fact staunchly opposed and spoke against it. Dr.Bhattacharya always enjoyed creating realistic characters and his story 'kolong ajio boi' apthy considered communistic ideal. Throughout the story, there is a reflection of compassion for the lower classes of people in society. being a progressive writer, Dr.Bhattacharya thought for the welfare of the entire society and also the liberation of the poor exploited people.

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