

Mythological characters in the poems of Manohar Mouli Biswas**Santosh Saha****MA(English)****ABSTRACT:**

Myth is basically related to our lives and is used to form good or bad ideas specifically about characters in literature. The behavior of a tender lady is expressed through the characters like Savitri or Sita and the reverse is true when Surpanakha's character is presented. In literature use of Myth is not any innovative concept and in case of Bengali literature especially in Dalit writing it is no exception. From Greek to Post Modern Literature myth is used the readers' or spectators' understanding level easy. From Joydev to Jibonanda Myth has been used literally and it has become very popular even today. Again Bhupen Hazarika an Internationally reputed singer, composed a song named "Behula Bangla Amar ..." Sahitya, Sangit, Chitrakala-myth is everywhere. In this article I have tried to represent the mythological characters in the poems of Manohar Mouli Biswas, the famous revolutionary Dalit voice in Bengal.

Key Words: Myth, represent, contextual, revolutionary.

Mythological characters in the poems of Manohar Mouli Biswas**Santosh Saha****MA(English)****INTRODUCTION:**

Ideal characters are given importance in literature and these characters are basically Aryan characters. They have been presented as symbol of auspicious and tenderness. They are our ideal, our real life hero. Honesty, Love, Respect, Generosity, Chivalry are presented through these characters. On the other hand there are some characters like Surpanakha, Ravana Mahisasur etc representing negative qualities like inauspicious hatred disgust Danava. And such characters in spite of having brevity and energy are deprived of our sympathy and expected to be defeated by the others. But after Michael Madhusudan Dutta a revolutionary and constructive change came. While India was under British Rule, "Adwija Chandal", i.e. all Indians (from upper caste to lower caste) were non Aryans (kala aadmi). So in spite of having muscle power and pure love towards the country, the indigenous were downtrodden - from this realization, the concept of caste discrimination came. In Meghnadbodh Kavya, Indrajit is a non Aryan character. Michael Madhusudan Dutta saw it from a new perspective. He did not want to underestimate Sita. More or less after a long gap we got the poet Manohar Mouli Biswas in this line. The portrait of non Aryan character has been done in a unique flavour by Mr. Manohar Mouli Biswas in his poems. In Ghatotkachch and Hidimba: A Dialogue is a fine example of a different taste. During the Kurukshetra War Ghatotkachch was invited to fight in favour of Pandava. Ghatotkachch informed his mother about the war and made a discussion about the war. That discussion shows both Ghatotkachch and Hidimba as son and wife respectively deprived of Bheem's love and kingly status. Manohar Mouli Biswas is very honest and revolutionary in his portrait of Ghatotkachch:

Never had a loving word

From her husband

Am son of king, tell me why

I remain in the home of my maternal

Grandfather

Abandoned by my Kin?

When Hidimba heard of Kurukshetra war, she as an ideal husband- loving typical Indian wife advises her son Ghatotkachch:

I, your mother
plead before you
Listen to me –my husband is in danger
Prepare yourself
Prepare yourself to go war
For your paternal Kin.

But Ghatotkachch's mind is full of suspension. He knows very well that he will fight against Karna. Both Karna and Ghatotkachch are deprived of Aryan and Aryan society-Ghatotkachch is deprived of Father's love and Karna of Mother's love. To satisfy the Arya both the non- Aryans are fighting each other. Mr. Biswas clearly admits that this is nothing but "suicidal war." The same realization is felt in 'Lohar Byatha' (pains of Iron) by Jatindranath Sengupta. He asked his mother if She had entertained love and respect from her Aryan husband. This is a burning and eternal question even today. The dalit women are tortured and consumed by the non dalits. He repeatedly asks his mother:

Were you not raped?

Were you not defiled?

Were you not dishonored?

As a representative of the downtrodden non- Aryan (now dalit) society, he wants to forget caste discrimination that is between Aryan and non Aryan, between upper caste and lower caste:

Ma, you told me to forget

The divisions between Aryan and non Aryan

I want to forget

But who allows it?

By swallowing the history of his mother's deprivation, he is keenly interested to fight. But he asked a question to his mother: "Shall I go to war?"...He told his mother that "this is a difficult war the earth presents/The deprived fight against the deprived..."Kurukshetra war is a war against injustice. But Ghatotkachch and his mother is deprived of their "dear" father,Bheem.Now the eternal question is: Which partisan he will take in Kurukshetra War?In the poem Mr. Biswas puts so many questions in Ghatotkachch's lips ,but Hidimba like typical Indian mother admits:

Forgive your unfortunate mother,
I know not-I know nothing
Only this
That I am your mother and you are my son.

Like Michael Madhusudan Dutt, Mr. Biswas presents non Aryan characters in a new flavor especially to the deprived downtrodden dalit readers. In spite of having upper caste origin , Ghatotkachch will remain deprived forever. The pangs and sufferings of Ghatotkachch will influence the dalit readers.Here is the poet's success.

Again the similar theme is treated by Mr. Biswas in his poem, "I shall go to war." It is actually a brief edition of the dialogue between Ghatotkachch and Hidimba .In this poem he admits unhesitatingly "the old fashioned myth":

"Father is Heaven. Father is Religion." (I shall go to War)

He also questions about his mother's dignity.Inspite of having all the qualities like brevity, physique, honesty, chivalry etc, why he did not get the status of a great Arya Dynasty. Injustice of religion becomes prominent here when he says:

Even today flash like thunder
Breaking the air into pieces
Slicing it into halves
I am not a Babrubahan!
I am not a Abhimannu
I am a child.... (I shall Go to War)

Ghatotkachch asked his mother Hidimba why he will go to fight in favour his father who did not favour his sonbecause he was the son of a non Aryan mother. Hidimba did not receive the status of a legal wife in the palace in spite of being the "incarnation of love" in her heart .Therefore, he asked his mother that he is unintentional to fight in favour of his father,Bheem .

In spite of being members of sudra Dynasty the great poet Valmiki and Krishna Dwaipayana Vyasdeb established themselves for their own talent and qualities. The poet Manohar Mouli Biswas presents this in his poem “Smritir Jagoran.” Again, in “Bodlir Chakri” the poet shows his keen interest towards the Manosamongal/mythological characters like Behula-Lakshmindar. In ‘Tilak’ injustice of Dronacharya towards Eklavya is inculcated by Manohar Mouli Biswas. In “Valmiki” the poet enquires which “artistic principles” he follows when he writes The Ramayana. But the great poet exposes with praise the Aryan character. On the other hand, he presents the non Aryan characters tiny, dishonest and sometimes as demon. What Ravana did is a punishable offence but Lakshman too is no exception. Lakshman also committed a great offence by hitting Surpanakha. Ravana just made a protest, though offensive. Here Manohar Mouli Biswas is very unique and honest to represent his characters. But Valmiki did not give importance to the Sudra characters though “the blood that flowed” through his veins “was that of Sambuka.” Here dalit poet Manohar puts a question:

In the killing Sambuka your pen

Did not tremble even for a moment? (Valmiki)

Not only the poet, but also the whole universe admits genius of Valmiki as a sudra born poet. But the Sudra remains undignified in his epic. In the post modern scenario Valmiki is still alive even today:

O Valmiki, great poet,

Even today you are a great poet

To the all people of India! (Valmiki)

In this respect he reminds/recollects Manusanhita in his poem ‘Manobotar Biruddhe’ (Against Humanity). The poet mentions fourteen Brahmins who transformed the Sudra community into servant forever. For this reason in Jhilimili Field, the pangs and agonies of Ulupi, Hidimba, and Surpanakha are felt to all the conscientious and discriminating readers. Love and affection is a natural quality of human beings but being the members of Sudra society some of them are repudiated and jilted and some are used. Again, in “Bodlir Chakri” the poet shows his keen interest towards the Manosamongal/mythological characters like Behula-Lakshmindar. In ‘Tilak’ injustice of Dronacharya towards Eklavya is inculcated by Manohar Mouli Biswas.

In Jatayu’s telling a tale, the poet Manohar Mouli Biswas is very minute in his representation of characters. Jatayu puts a question that Upper caste (Aryan characters) may

perform crime but they are not criminals. The poet presents the pangs and agonies of the dalit society. As a representative of the non Aryan civilization, Jatayu did not support the incident like snatching of Sita whom Ravana, another non Aryan, unethically snatched. As a result of this protest, his hirings had been slashed. The poet Manohar Mouli Biswas has reproduced a part of the old and universal Ramayana. A powerless feeble and of slashed winged bird Jatayu admits Sita did not face any kind of harassment while she was forcefully driven by Ravana. In spite of that Jatayu tries to protect Sita as per his ability and castigates Ravana's misdeed. What Jatayu realizes Lakshman did not: Love is nothing but Nature's call. Surpanakha being young and beautiful lady bestowed her love to Lakshman:

If, in natural urge from heart, bestowed her love

To Lakshman the attractive youth in her eyes, (Jatayu's telling A Tale)

In love acceptance and rejection are very common and natural incidents. But the method of denial is very shameful. Lakshman may or may not accept Surpanakha's love. But as a member of the civilized society he should not follow that way. Therefore the poet expresses his sorrow and hatred for Lakshman. This denial is not simply a denial of love rather it's a question of ego:

Certainly in Thy soul, thou stored massive hatred

For low –castes

Thou impudent audacity reached to that extent.

Everybody should express respect and gratitude for ladies. But Lakshman lacked that civility. He physically harasses Surpanakha because she belonged to low caste. On account of 'impudent audacity', he did not hesitate to chop her (Surpanakha's) nose with the sharp weapons. And finally Jatayu admits the age old system even today:

In the hills and forests, still persists the region

Of those ill-powers.

CONCLUSION:

As a member of dalit, downtrodden society / class Manohar Mouli Biswas is ready and conscious enough to inculcate a realistic and live telecast of their daily life through his mythological characters and pinpoints the pain and agonies of caste discrimination. On account of being non Aryans these characters remain deprived and untouched to the age old readers and

conservatives. These non Aryan downtrodden characters are not able to secure a stable position and even readers' soft corner. But after Michael Madhusudan Dutta and now Manohar Mouli Biswas ,I am quite sure enough about the fact that these characters will be able to identify themselves to the so called conservatives and common readers. And now the children will not be afraid of Ravana. Rather they will treat Him as a defendant/respondent character.

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