

Asamer Bangla Little Magazine : Chotogalpocharchar Prekshapat O Kromobikash' by Jyotirmoy Sengupta : Seeking Newer Space in the Sphere of Bengali Short-Stories



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Abstract

The present study is merely a survey on the growth and development of Bengali literature with a special reference to that of Bengali short stories of Assam's Barak and Brahmaputra vallies published in the little magazines over a period of four decades. Assam has remained very much eventful during these decades in the field of political, economic and social aspects.

The Bengali little magazines of Assam has served a great purpose through the documentation of the writings of authors of these areas (Barak and Brahmaputra). That is why an unprecedented role and responsibilities to the society is being credited to the little magazines of Bengali language of Assam. Bengali short stories and the little magazines of Assam has made a permanent place in the history of literature of Assam which is at per with that of other parts of the country.

In this context, an endeavour to critically evaluate and appreciate the founding forces behind the study of Bengali short stories as embodied in the little magazines is being made keeping the book 'Asamer Bangla little Magazine : Chotogalpocharchar prekshapat o kromobikash' by Jyotirmoy Sengupta, at the centre of discussion.

The book by Jyotirmoy Sengupta has remained to be a landmark in this field, for it carries a considerable amount of resource and informations as a guideline for further study & institutional research.

Keywords: Little Magazines, Bengali, Language

Introduction

The study of Bengali short-stories of the North-East India, Specially in Barak and Bramhaputra Valley has a long tradition. People who were interested in literature particularly the Bengali people used to write poetry, short-stories, essays and fictions in little magazines as well as in weekly journals etc. with unparallel enthusiasm and spirit. Communal riots, freedom movements, partition, political and social disturbances have left tremendous impact on the life of the people of North-East India. Despite all these difficulties and hurdles people who were engaged in giving literary expressions of their sufferings and views of those days overcome it successfully. But for a quite long time the literary contribution of the said geographical area of Barak and Brahmaputra Valley remind in oblivion. In this respect, critic Nirmal Das has said, "That is why a sense of deprivation is being heard. Which silently has given birth to a newer sphere termed as the 'Third world' of the Bengali Literature."¹ There is an ample scope for adequate research to highlight a continuous investigation in this field. Previously some superficial attempts have been made in a very restricted manner in the lines of introductory explanation of available subjective documents of a fewer publications of short-stories, novels, essays etc.

Some discussions have been made on the magazines such as 'Purbhadesh' on the writing of Shiba Vattacharya and Bijit Kumar Vattacharya. Some important remarks and assessments are available in a Collection of short-stories entitled 'Barak Upatyakar nirbachita galpo' by Tapadhir vattacharya and 'Barakparer galpa Sankhalan' by Karunaramoy Vattacharya. They have very clearly reported the necessity of compilation and documentions of short-stories and other literary items and have also pointed out the problems in collecting them. On the other hand essaist

Manik Das has focussed the limitations of study of short-stories in different aspects in his essay on 'Bramhaputra Upatyakar Patra-Patrika: Ekti Samkhipta Ruprekha'. There is no such discussion on the story-tellers or their stories in the introduction portion of the book 'Uttar Purber nirbachita Bangla galpo.' An attempt for a decent compilation has remained main focus point in them. Anjan Sen, the critic has discussed in detail on the forms and techniques of the writing of Ranabhir Purakayastha in the book 'Tritiya bhuvanar Rupkatha'. Which is a collection of some twelve short stories, though precise still very much significant. The book 'Asamer Bangla little magazine Choto galpocharchar prekshapat o kromobikash' by Jyotirmoy Sengupta has remained a milestone and maiden attempt in the field of academic discussions.

In addition to it two books of Bengali short-stories by Nirmal Das from Tripura Claims to be mentioned with credit. He has discussed elaborately on the short-stories written by authors like Bimal Chowdury, Sukhamoy Ghosh, Subimal Roy, Bhiswadev Vattacharya and Bimal Singha in his book 'Uttar purber Bangla Chotogalpa Bikshan : 'Parba Tripura' He said here, "The number of short-stories of the writers in his collection has remained to be the first attempt of it's kind in the field of Both short-stories and their writers of Tripura in a systematic manner."²

Yet an attempt has been made long ago to discuss about the stories of North-East without that of Tripura. Secondly we get a compact analysis and interpretation of about twenty-five short-stories of North-East India, by the author Nirmal Das in his second volume of the publication. 'Uttar Purber Bangla Chotogalpo Bikshan-Dui (Parba Tripura)', we miss here any such story or story writer from the state of Meghalaya or Nagaland, the reason for which may be the fact that the development of Bengali literature particularly writing of short-stories has not been so popular to prove it's existence in this area. Upto this point of our discussion only the book 'Asamer Bangla little magazine : Chotogalpo charchar Chotogal perprekshapat o kromobikash' by Jyotirmoy sengupta has remained most important and worth-mentioning in this domain of short stories, it's perspective and development.

The book 'Asamer bangla little magazine : Chatogalpo charchar prekshapat Kromobikash' by Jyotirmoy Sengupta deals with the stories published from the Sventieth (70's) of twentient century to the first decade of twenty-first century. The book is arranged in a fashion firstly-

1. Preface
2. Bengalee Community in Assam and Bengali little magazines in a historical background.
3. Bengali little Magazines of Assam in a regional perspective.
4. An overview of subjective diversity and literary objectives.
5. An Identification of time and space as to the writers of the contemporary world.
6. The Last word.
7. Addendum – Recent short-stories of Assam a manifesto of a turbulent period of time.
8. Supporting documents: Magazines and Books.

Critic Jyotirmoy has found out about more or less two hundred short story writers from different little magazines published from time to time. His untiring efforts in this venture has suffered a set back due to lack of informations, absence of adequate preservative measures and difficulties in communication due to geographical isolation of places of resource. Apart from all these things his venture in this effort has remained most valuable for the future studies and research in Bengali literature of Assam. The first Chapter of the book deals with the perspective of the Bengali settlement in Assam for a quite long period of time and side by side the cultivation of little magazines there. Here the author interprets the subject with the reference of 'Gurucharit Katha' by Maheswar Neog, 'Assam burangi' by Haliram dhekiel Phukan' 'Asamiya aru Bangali' by Bolinarayana Bara and some valuable mentions from the 'Assam Tribune' magazine. In addition to the political and socio-economic problems of Assam the circulation of Assam's Bengali little magazine in it's regional dimension has been discussed in the second Chapter. There is a list of little magazines published in the year from 1976 to 2000. And the state of Assam has been divided into five regions for example- North, South, East, West and the central Assam (with the help of a map). "The main focus and thrust area of his research initiative is how and in what way the Literary and cultural consciousness of Bengalee community has been spread over whole of Assam, keeping the rural and urban life as it's motive-force in the centre."³

The Varieties of subject and the main spirit of the short-stories has been elaborately discussed in the third chapter of the book. Subjectwise stratification of the stories are as follows-

1. Stories relating to Social crisis.
2. Stories relating to political problems.
3. Stories relating to love and hatred.
4. Stories relating to Modern living and life style / mirror of a time.
5. Assam : A Portrait of crisis.
6. Others.

The above Classification has been made from the different point of view in relation to the content of the short-stories under consideration. In this respect mention may be made of the works like 'Bhut o Bhater galpo' by Badarujaman Choudhury' 'Dour 40 by Mithilesh Bhattacharya, 'Aajan' by Sekhar Das, 'Shua' by Ranabir Purokastha, 'Aabarto' by Bijaya dev, 'Ananter dike barano duti haat' by Manas Shikdar and 'Voi' by Kishoreranjan dey etc. Jyotirmoy Sengupta has laid much importance on the characterization and decaying aspect of a portion of the society. Where the society tries desperately to survive with the conflicting forces of greed and ambition, hunger and deprivation, death and co-existence towards and eternal repetition of it. Change of a character and place do not help changes of the society as a whole.⁴ Such evaluation of short-stories is appreciating because of the fact that it provides ample scope for future textual criticism. Here a mention may be made of the struggle of characters in the short-stories of Arati Deb, Manas Shikdar, where vested interest in the society has played a

crucial role in explaining such struggle of characters. The writer Jyotirmoy Sengupta points to the cruelty and lack of compassion of the society where social values are measured in the line of 'survival of the fittest' giving it a modern interpretation of the Darwinian theory of evaluation.⁵ Writings of Mithilesh Bhattacharya, Arati deb, Debiprasad Singha, Himanish Bhattacharya, Kishoreranjan dey make us feel deeply to our mind.

In the fourth chapter of the book we see an attempt to measure the influence of national and international incidents in the field of short-stories from the year 1971-2000. Human society has experienced severe social, economic and political crisis where globalization and consumerism, Commercial Competition etc have created a new horizon in shapping the course of time for the future, which Jyotirmoy sengupta has hinted at in his book. He states clearly about his book that-

"The total number of story writers and the number of books published in the little magazines can not be fully discussed here because the perpective for such discussion has not yet been made. We here try to highlight the dimentions and the background of the birth of Bengali short-stories within the time period of 1971-2000."⁶

The end portion of the book provides a summary of the basic theme of it's content. In the additional portion of the book an overview has been made on the short-stories upto the first decede of the 21st century that is upto 2010. This addition has been done for updating it because of the fact that this search work was published in the year 2000.

Aim of the Study

The present study aims at critically highlighting the role of little magazines as the founding force of literary development of Bengali short -stories of Assam spread over the Barak and Brahmputra vallies within the time period of 1970-2000 onward.

Conclusion

Above all we can find here a bold attempt towards the formulation of a systematic history on the discussions of the origin and development of Bengali short-stories in the little magazines. This attempt is equally important for the same book, which remains a milestone in the lines of academic and cultural exercise of history of little magazines and the Bengali literature of Barak and Bramhaputra valley of Assam. In spite of few printing mistakes and others this publication will remain valuable and attract the attention of the researchers and academicians too not merely for providing a space for future research but for it's tranperency of statements. Written in a simple and sublime style Jyotirmoy Sengupta's book is sure to draw the attention of both authors and readerers as well.

References

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2. *Ibid.*

3. *Jyotirmoy Sengupta, 'Asamer Bangla little magazine : Chotogalpa Charchar Prekshapat o kromabikash,' Bangiya, sahitya Sangsad, Kolkata- 700009, June 2012, P. 62.*
4. *Ibid, P.71.*
5. *Ibid, p. 75.*
6. *Ibid, P. 139.*