

An Analytical Study Of Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi's "Saba Kota Manuh" As A Tribal Novel

Gultaz Yesmin (M.A., NET)

Research Scholar, Department of Assamese,
Cotton University ,Assam.

Gmail: gultazesmin99@gmail.com

Abstract

North-East is the only part of the Nation where largest population of different tribal communities lives together. It is obvious to find diverse socio-cultural lives in this region due to the residents of diverse communities. These communities introduce themselves as a single entity by accepting the common language, rituals, traditions etc. However every community follows their distinct tradition, tribal orthodoxy till the present era. The way of living, tradition, beliefs, culture, festivals, occasions, folk literature and all other things of the tribal communities become the source of the writer in writing this novel. The writer is not confined to the tribal groups of Assam only but he has also considered the tribal communities of the neighbouring states. The manifestation of tribal lives and other aspects of the society makes the Assamese novels more interesting. Novels play a significant role in reflecting the various ways of living of the simple and innocent tribal communities, which are far away from the light of modern civilization. In literature, the novels about the tribal communities occupies a renowned position, because of the uniqueness and significance of their society and life of the people. Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi has spent his life among the tribal culture and community of Arunachal Pradesh, but he composes his works in Assamese language.

From the vast area of Assamese novels about the tribal communities, I have chosen my topic from the novel of

Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi's "Saba Kota Manuh" and have prepared this research paper as 'An analytical Study of Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi's "Saba Kota Manuh" as a Tribal Novel'.

Introduction:

Objective of this study:

The main objective of this research paper is to study the reflection of the tribal society in the novel "Saba Kota Manuh".

Method of Study:

This research paper is been prepared by using analytical method.

Scope of this research:

In this paper, a brief overview of a tribal society and it's reflection in Assamese novels has been critically evaluated.

Discussion of the topic:

A pure connection among various tribes and communities has been established in Assam, a state located in the Eastern part of India from ancient times. The life of the people residing in the northeast area is very colourful due to the mixing up of different cultures, societies, traditions etc. The living style of the people residing in this areas is itself very beautiful and noticeable. When we want to connect and know the lives of people, the genre of novel comes to the front because novels are the particular source where small and deep observation of life can be seen. The root of the novels is the reflection of life and society in it. In the novels from the ancient till now, the depiction of the life and society of the hilly population of the north-east states are equally and significantly done in parallel to the depiction of the people of the plain areas.

In these novels, we can see depiction of the standard of living, rituals, principles, superstition, festivals, social

and cultural life of the people of a particular region in a vivid way. The whole northeast region was known as Bor Assam earlier for which an original and structural similarity can be found with a slight dissimilarity in nature of the area among its population. In the writings of the Assamese novelists they observe psychology of the tribal population of the northeast people keenly and covers these in their novels. In describing the lives of the tribal population in literary works, we can exemplify the name of Rajani Kanta Bordoloi's "Miri Jiori" as the pathfinder of this kind of work. After this novel many novelists tried to portray tribal lives in their works. For example the works on the people of Arunachal Pradesh by Lumme Dai are Paharor Hile Hile, Prithibir Hahi, Koinar Mulya, Mon aru Mon and Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi's Sanam, Likjhik.

In the life of Naga people, Kailash Sharma wrote Bidrohi Nagar Hatot, Anami Nagini, Dalimir Xopun; Birendra Kumar Bhattacharjee's Yaruvingam; Pashupati Bharadwaj's Chimchangor Duti Par in the life of people of Meghalaya; Swarna Bora's Chimchang Nodir Hahi; Amulya Barua's Uu Khun Jonga, Jayanta Rangpi's Puwate Ajak Dhanesh on the Karbi people; Rangbang Terang's Rangmilir Hahi Bishnu Prasad Rabha's Missing Koneng; Bhaben Pegu's Oyang; Ganesh Pegu's Pohpur; Swarna Bora's Diyung Nodir Geet about the Dimasa people are the best examples. Above all this cited example, there are many more novels based on the tribal lives in the Assamese literature.

The archaeological sources found in Arunachal Pradesh, heaven of northeast bears the evidence of existence of a civilized society in that region and the northeast from the ancient time.

The linguist found a wide area in Arunachal Pradesh for their research where almost 26 numbers of tribes and sub-tribes live. Arunachal Pradesh is a tribal dominated state of the northeast. With some similarities there are some contradiction among them like their way of living, rituals, costumes, festivals and other Traditions. The language of Arunachal Pradesh have origin in China Tibetan. Arunachal was a very important part of Assam

when the whole region was known as North East Frontier. Assamese was the core language to communicate in the plains and hills. From the previous period, to maintain relation with the hilly tribe one should be familiar with the Assamese language. Assamese language plays a chief role in maintaining the communication among the hilly people with the others. Assamese is the medium of literary works in Arunachal Pradesh so we found many tribal writers writing in Assamese. They create literature in Assamese language and represent various aspects of tribal lives in it. Among them Lumme Dai and Yeshe Dorjee Thongchi are remarkable writers. Their effort to observe and reflect their lives in literature is praiseworthy.

Subject:

After the death of Monpa people, they cut the dead body into 108 pieces and throw it in rivers. Cutting of the dead body into pieces itself is a crucial and horrific. The novel "Saba Kota Manuh" is a description of Aau Thampa, who does this activities. This novel also describes many contemporary events taken place in Arunachal Pradesh.

The horrific act of cutting the dead bodies is considered as holy action for the person who does this. By cutting one dead body a person gains equal virtue that gets from going on a pilgrimage. This novel explains about Au Thampa, his wife Guichangmu and their dumb daughter Rinsim.

The Monpa tribe of Arunachal Pradesh believes that people should help others in their life span and also should help others after death so they cut the dead bodies and throw in the river.

The Monpa tribes are Buddhist people. Their Buddhist religion defers from the Buddha's original philosophy but has similarities with Buddhism of Tibet region. In the novel, Buddhist rituals and worship is vividly described. The writer mentions Dalai Lama's worshiping of Buddhist Tantrism. Before worshiping Buddhist Tantrism one needs to purify their body and soul by avoiding consumption of liquor, meat, fish etc.

Like other tribes, among the Monpa tribe also there is the tradition of preferring marriage of person with their maternal and paternal cousins. That's why Rijomba considered Au Thampa as his husband from their childhood. Among the Monpa tribe, polygamy is very common. They do their funeral in a different way than others. However, with time their social life also changes like other tribal societies. The people of the northeast region celebrates various festivals. The festival of Turagya and Lushe of the Monpa tribe is mentioned here in the novel. Turagya festival is celebrated in the winter. In this festival, a fair (mela) is organised where they consume changchang and Arra together. They celebrate Lushe for about fifteen to thirty days.

In the end of this novel, the funeral of Rijomba has been completed. His dead body and Au Thampa's dead body is are thrown into the river Tawangshu. The novel ends in a supernatural manner.

Conclusion:

After discussing this research paper we come to some conclusion:

- 1) This novel throws light into various aspects of the lives of Monpa tribe and also to the contemporary reality of the society
- 2) Through the character of Dyarge, a very disturbed, unorganised life and mental misbalance of a person who cuts the dead bodies is portrayed in the novel.
- 3) In the novel we can see the changes of the Monpa tribe and society from time to time.

Bibliography:

1. Sharma, Satyendranath: Asomiya Sahityar Samikhyatmak Etibritta, Soumar Prakash, Rihabari, Guwahati, 10th republication, edition, June, 2011.
2. Das, Amal Chandra(edi): Asomiya Upanyash Parikrama, Banlata, Guwahati, 2nd Edition, June, 2021.
3. Sharma, Satyendranath: Asomiya Upanyashor Bhumika, Soumar Prakash, Guwahati, republication, 2014.

4. Thakur, Dr. Nagen(edi): Esho Bosorot Asomiya Upanyash. Jyoti Prakashan, Guwahati, republication, November, 2018
5. Talukdar, Pranjal(edi): Asomiya Sahityar Vinna Parba, Purbayan Prakashan, Guwahati, republication, March, 2021.
6. Thongchi, Yeshe Dorjee: Saba Kota Manuh, Banlata, Guwahati, 8th edition, June , 2020.