



Pollution, Nature in the Selected Novels of NE India region

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Abstract:

In the English novels of NE region of India also we find ample descriptions of nature. If in a novel we find the description of a river, in another novel we find imaginative description of nature and in other human activities in nature. Some such novels are- Mitra Phukan's 'A Monsoon of Music', Jahnabi Barua's 'Rebirth', Siddarth Sarma's 'The Grasshopper's Run', Dhruva Hazarika's 'A Bowstring of Winter' and Easterine Kire's 'When the River Sleeps', in L.W. Bapu's 'Khanduma's Curse and Siddartha Dev's 'Surface'. In Mitra Phukan's 'A Monsoon of Music' we find the mention of Red River for boating and entertainment. In Jahnabi Barua's 'Rebirth' also we find the reference of the Brahmaputra River and Deepar Beel which is a lake, a natural habitat for aquatic animals and bird. The writer is concerned of the encroachment of the Beel and the aquatic environment which get polluted. In Easterine Kire's 'When the River Sleeps' we find about the mention of rain forest, many medicinal herbs, animals in this novels. In Dhruva Hazarika's 'A Bowstring of Winter' we find the description of the hills of Meghalaya. The people worship the Mountain as God. In Siddartha Dev's 'Surface' we find the description of the hills of Manipur and even Myanmar boarder. In spite of this the dwellers here have to face problem because of lack of connectivity.

Key Words- River, Forest, Lake, Herbs, Pollution.

Pollution, Nature in the Selected Novels from NE region

Nature is always one of the main sources of literature. In novels of NE region of India also we find ample description of nature. It is because in this region there are still many forest areas, hills, rivers lakes etc. If in a novel we find the description of historical war description, in some novels we find the description of a river, in another novel we find imaginative description of nature and in other we find human activities in nature. Some such novels where we find such descriptions are- Mitra Phukan's 'A Monsoon of Music' (2011) Jahnabi Barua's 'Rebirth'(2010), Siddarth Sarma's 'The Grasshopper's Run' (2009), Dhruva Hazarika's 'A Bowstring of Winter' (2006) and Easterine Kire's 'When the River Sleeps' (2014) in L.W. Bapu's 'Khanduma's Curse' (2012) and Siddartha Dev's 'Surface' (2005). In the NE English novels, we find the mention of rivers, lakes, hills, mountain, and forests of the region. The authors include them spontaneously; at so ease that everyone will accept them as integral part of the plot. If we see human society as the central point, then they are periphery. But without nature can we exist? So they are part and parcel of human society and in literature also



they are presented as inseparable way. But they are unlike the conscious propaganda or a motto type which we see among the conscious citizens for saving the environment or saving forests and forests' lives. They appear so naturally that anyone can find that the authors are grown up amidst such surroundings and so it seems that they are described without much effort on the part of the authors. The authors are consummate authors and they can well portrait their natural surroundings by pen. It is not that in the NE region the forest areas are not decreasing. They are decreasing than the earlier time and every year they are decreasing. However, the natural bounty of the region is naturally replenished also. In the English novels of the region we find the description of such forests, people's activities and their attachment with the environment.

In Mitra Phukan's 'A Monsoon of Music ' we find the mention of Red River in Tamulbari an imaginary place which may be the Brahmaputra River. The hero Rahul and heroine Nomita go to the river for boating and they spend time there. Although the heroine Nomita is a singer she is not indoor typed. She likes to spend time with friends and with her lover by the river. We find that they often go to the river for boat-ride. They like the fresh, clean air. They even

notice river dolphin. "There! We saw a river dolphin! Right there! " (AMOM, P-60) Although it is not mentioned in the novel but according to news we come to know that the numbers of river dolphins are decreasing due to pollution. So we should keep the river clean to let the aquatic lives live.

Their love scene is lively amidst nature. They could talk freely and open-up with each other without hesitation. The Red River offers entertain to the tourists as they can do boating there and can enjoy the beautiful scenery of the surroundings area. There are many boat restaurants run at the side of the river. The boat restaurants are big in size. One named as 'Jolporee'. At the evening time they look really attractive. It is a good business for the local people there and they offer the visitors or tourists best food and they can enjoy the setting of the sun or can unfold their minds.

In Jahnabi Baruah's 'Rebirth' also we find the reference of the Brahmaputra River which flows through Assam. There is the description of Deepor Beel which is a lake, a natural habitat for aquatic animals and bird. The writer is concerned of the encroachment of the Beel and the aquatic environment which get polluted. The heroine describes the Beel and the river when she comes from Bangalore to Guwahati. The heroine Kaveri is worried about the brick kilns near it. She thinks, "Brick kilns grow like cancerous growths ...one day it will surely give up and die, this wild wetland." (Rebirth, p-146)

In Siddarth Sarma's 'The Grasshopper's Run' we find about the description of hills of Nagaland at the time of pre-independence era. In TGR we find that the author writes about the forest of Nagaland as the habitat of the people. Both are inseparable. Everything happens amidst nature i.e. they take food from nature, take sheltering materials from nature etc. They hunt animals for food unlike the British. One old Naga told the teen hero Gojen like this, "People like you, like the Ingraz, hunt because it is fun". (TGHR, p-43)



The novel is based on the theme of revenge where the hero hides himself in the time of taking the revenge of his friend's death. Here we find folktale based on nature. The little of the novel is also based on the folk tale.

In Druba Hazarika's 'A Bowstring of Winter' we find the description of the hills of Meghalaya. There we find how the people live with nature. There is the description of the beauty of Umiam Lake. The beauty of the lake is compared in the following way- "Like a beautiful woman sleeping for centuries so that even the sky falls in love with her." (ABSW, p-40)

There is the description or mention of nature almost in every page, like- 'a shrill cry of a cicada', a valley,' a clump of bamboo', 'sun-kissed hill' etc. They even worship the Mountain as God. The hero John Dkhar and his partner Kharkongor hide in forest when they fight with their counterparts James and Charley. However, the mentions of natural scenery or objects of nature are very brief and we do not find about pollution or anything about depletion of nature.

In Siddhartha Dev's 'Surface' we find the description of the hills of Meghalaya, Manipur and even Myanmar boarder. We find how the ultras are residing in forest, how they use forest for hiding and fight. The north-east region is full of natural objects like hills, rivers, lakes; forest with it's the pristine beauty. In spite of this the dwellers here have to face problem because of lack of connectivity. In the novel we find about ambush of the insurgent group, their camps in the forest at Myanmar boarder which the underground organizations choose because of hills and forest. Here we find the praise of the beauty of nature also. However, amidst the beauty of nature we see some other features of nature. There is the mention of bad road of watery ditches, and it is because of hills and forest. There is mention of frequent landslides in the roads. There is the description of the Moirang Lake of Manipur. The people live there in floating huts in the lake. They have "incredible environmental sense" and so they live "in complete harmony with the ecology." (Surface, p-34)

In L.W. Bapu's 'Khanduma's Curse' we find the description of the hills of Arunachal Pradesh which appears as one the plots of the novel. There we find some imaginary creatures. They are existed in the minds of the people there because of the thick forest. The forest not only provides the plot of imagination but the products of the forest are the source of their livelihood. However, the creative aura and green or colorful surroundings witches, Goddess etc. and imaginary plot are possible only because of hills, rivers and forest of the state. The life of the people is with nature. Even after death their dead bodies are thrown into river by cutting into pieces as a ritual to feed the aquatic beings. Here there is described such incident where Yontan, the hero had to offer the dead body of his mother to the aquatic beings. They worship the mountain, the peak as deity. For instance, there is the mention of Wangle peak, '...from time immemorial, the peak had been revered as their guarding deity.' (KC, P-267)

In Easterine Kire's 'When the River Sleeps' we find about the description of hills of Nagaland. Here we find the hero, Vilie he believes that the forest is his wife. He often tells, "The forest is my wife" (WTRS, P-9). His beloved died by saying that someone from the forest calls her. We find the mention of rain forest, many herbs some are medicinal, animals in this novels. Vilie guards the forest, looks



after the tragopans, (a kind colourful bird) and saves the forest from hunters. We find the names of various medicinal herbs in the novel, Ciena or bitter wormwood, Tierhutiepfu etc. When he was in search of the sleeping river, he finds the Rarhuria or unclean forest; the local people believe that spirits live there as people fall ill after entering the forest. The author writes in the authorial remark that actually it is a rain forest and as the village people fall ill and suffer from headache they label it as 'unclean area'. "People studiously avoided coming near the forest." (WTRS, p-51) However we find about the mention and of spirits in the forest also.

Thus in the description of the plots, characters and the development of the themes we see that the writers consciously or unconsciously use the background of nature. It may be the reason that when someone stays or lives beside a river of hill or sea or ocean or amidst then he/ she will definitely be influenced by the nature or the sounding. Nature makes us. Although God makes nature like rivers, ocean, hills it is our duty to protect and enrich the nature.

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