

RIVER METAPHOR IN INDIAN POETRY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE POEMS OF NAVAKANTA BARUA

Juri Bhuyan

Research Scholar,

Dibrugarh University.

Abstract:

Literature is the reflection of human life and society. River can be said to be the mother of human civilization. So, literature has been reflecting rivers since its beginning. River is found sometimes present in literature physically at the background and sometimes it is used as a metaphor with deeper sense and a symbolic meaning. Assamese poet Navakanta Barua was pioneers of Modernistic trend to the poetry of his respective mother tongue. This study will highlight his outlook into the river and use of river as a metaphor. This study of river metaphor can be considered to be a gate way into the understand of river metaphor in Indian poetry.

1.0. Introduction

River can be said to be the mother of human life and human civilization. Most of the human societies and human civilization develop surrounding river. And as a reflection of human life and society literature has been reflecting river since its beginning. River is sometimes present in literature with its physical characteristics at the background and sometimes it is used as a metaphor with a deeper sense and meaning.

1.2. Objectives of Study

The objectives of study is to analyze the river metaphor in literature with special reference to the poems of Navakanta Barua.

1.3. Methodology of Study

As the present study is descriptive and analytical in nature. Data was collected from different secondary sources such as books and article.

2.0. River Metaphor in the poems of Navakanta Barua

Navakanta Barua is one of the pioneers of modernistic trend in Assamese literature and his first collection of poems (i) He Aranya He Mahanagar (1951) has a great influence among his followers, Other collections are (ii) Eti Duti Agharati Tora (1957), (iii) Zati Aru Keitaman Sketch, (iv) Samrat (1962), Ravana (1963), (vi) Mor Aru Prithibir (1973), (vii) Ratnakar (1983), (viii) Ekhani Swachena Mukhare (1990), (ix) Sujamukhir Angikar (1990), (x) Mahakabyar Pandulipi (1990), (xi) Dalangat Tamighara (1999). He wrote about lost of

eternal human values, decay of society and culture, alienation, emption, emptiness and boredom of modern life and hopes for shelter of rest and peace somewhere. As a true modernist he is away from the world of nature and river is not very common in his poetry but in his most celebrated poems there is always direct or indirect references to the river.

2.1 River as the source of life in contrast to the Modern Lifeless Society.

Navakanta is fatigued in search of life giving river and water in the full and desolate modern society and finds a dry Luit. Luit or Brahmaputra is the source of life in Assam. By the side of the dry river there is no green paddy field. Every source of water is now dry and he finds throughout history only dry bones, cactus and the dead body of the land.

Eya nadir par

Shamukhar khola rodut jiliki chakut piyah lagay

Pani kot, pani?

Kot seujia parar dhanani?

Kagojar poke thai ga! neki kabitar sei rang

Luit sukan Luitat pani nai

(Kramashah)

He finds horridness of death in the barbour or life 'Duparar ei mritu bibhatsata/ Prangangar bandar'. The river Pranganga here is the source of life. In this 'Iyat Nadi Acil', he depicts a world of expending desert of destruction, greed and deception where river as a source of life is gradually dying-

Nadik nijara kari juritik shilane kari

Balia dolere farhe lata phular Samadhi

Chaya maya jinya eti baleye baleye uri,

Panir karane ghuri karobat bat heruway.



2.2 Destructive power of River

It is interesting to note that Navakanta has celebrated river as a source and life and at the same time he is also aware of the destructive power of river. In his celebrated poem 'Iyat Nadi Achil', river is a living being and is endowed with male sexual power. It rapes the paddy field and destroys the unborn children of pregnant paddy stalks. He also refers to the great flood at river Sindhu that has destroyed a civilization in a moment –

Dekhesu nadir bhale balatkar kara patharak

Palase kabar dia garbhyavati shasyar santan

Sshunichu sindhur bane nimisate nagarak atmosat kari

Eri thoi guchi juwa shmeshanar prashantir gan.

But he knows that there is a beauty even in destruction (dhibansar soundarya), caused by river. But when there is no river, there is no life, there one finds a growing desert, a matalic sky and a earth. The presence of a river even with its destructive power is better than no river.

2.3 Other River Metaphors

There are other metaphorical presence of river as woman and river as preserver of human ancestry. In this poem 'Hejar Nakshatra Zot', he presents river as a woman having both the facets of a mother and a mistress. And the world we live in is a world existing on the fertile body of that woman –

Sonali shasyar shishu zar stane rekhiche jitai

Abiram abhisar achinaki sager dhiyai

Brahmaputra Bhagirathi Nile aru Kalang Dikhow

Urbar bukut zar jibanaar ramdhenu mou.

Nagar prantar aru aranyar dekhichto chabi?

Tomar prithibi seya muru si prithibi

(Hejar Nakshatra Jot)

He realizes that his journey of life is a journey of doubt and fear and expresses it with the metaphor of a river –

Bidhatar chira bartaman

Mur chetaner sate

Ek lai jau

Jatra hei rahasyar girisanakera ahi pali

Ai palo padma na pramatta nadi. (upalabdhi)

3.0 Conclusion

From the above discussion it becomes clear that Navakanta Barua uses river metaphor as source of life. Navakanta absence of river means the desert of modern life. River and women become one in his poem. River is either a beloved or a mother to them. He says that rivers preserve human ancestry. In spite of being modernistic in technique, In his thinking about river, Navakanta still have the touch of Indian cultural heritage.

1. Hazarika, Karabi Deka : Asamiya Kabi aru Kabita, Banalata, Dibrugarh, 2011
2. Sarma Upendranath: Navakanta Baruar Kabita Goreyashi, Feb-2009. ed. Harekrishna Deka, Sahitya Prakash, Guwahati.