

Reflection of Mohun Bagan`s Nationalism & Patriotism for India in the film “Egaro” (Eleven)

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Introduction

Arun Roy’s film “Egaro” (“Eleven”) is based on the historical win of Mohun Bagan Club against East Yorkshire in 29th July, 1911 in the final match of IFA Shield tournament. The historical win of this institution created a new aspect in the field of India’s freedom movement. This is one of the greatest challenges to British colonialism and imperialism. The barefooted individuals show that yes, it is possible to fight against the powerful ruler and certainly it is difficult to defeat them but it is not impossible. The soccer was not India’s own discovered game. They learnt this game from the British rulers. So the barefooted individuals’ victory against the British settler in their one of the favorite games in which they were so much skilled was a notable part in the history of India. After getting invitation in 1911 in the IFA Shield tournament the legendary eleven individuals of Mohun Bagan Club took it as a challenge. They set their aim in a patriotic way that they not only fought for the glory and pride of their respected club but they even represented India in that tournament. Like various freedom fighters of India, those eleven individuals devoted their body and soul for the motherland’s success in that tournament. So many Indian indigenous peoples from various corners of India reached in the ground to be the witnessed of Mohun Bagan’s victory as a part of India’s revolution in 29th July, 1911. Even some persons from the crowd were not soccer lovers. The individuals of Mohun Bagan club selected football ground as their battlefield to revolt against powerful British settler and colonizer. The victory of Mohun Bagan in the final match made Indigenous peoples more spontaneous and braver. This event creates a new aspect in the history of Indian nationalism, which frightened the British rulers. Though there are some differences in the real and reel, but the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”) truly highlighted the new aspect of Indian nationalism and patriotism through the victory of Mohun Bagan Club in the final match of IFA Shield tournament in 29th July, 1911 against East Yorkshire which lightened the path of India’s independence more strongly and intensely.

Mohun Bagan Club was established in 1889 on 15th August in Bhupen Bose’s house. The big field of him was the first playground of Mohun Bagan Club. To get the membership of this club was not at all easy. The individuals’ dignity, behavior, attitude, education, nature were examined by the authorities of Mohun Bagan Club before giving the membership. So this club maintained the disciplinary matters from the very beginning. In the year of 1900 Sailen Basu became the secretary of Mohun Bagan Club. Being an army service man, he had created strong rules and regulations related with discipline for the betterment of the club. In the book *Mohunbagan Eastbengal Reshareshi (Mohun Bagan East Bengal Battle)*, Manas Chakrobarty has written that “Tar amolei Trades Cup joy (1906-08), Shield Joy ebong Mohunbaganer Bharatbikkhyato howa” (“In his time Mohun Bagan won Trades Cup (1906-08), Shield and became India famous”) (Chakrobarty 22). In the December of 1903, Lord Curzon announced to divide Bengal. To revoke the division of Bengal many meetings, rebellions were arranged in the Bengal. National rebellions had been started in Bengal against the unjustified decision of dividing Bengal. But the fear of English rulers was present in the mind of common folk. Various voices and protests were continuously shattered. People were campaigning in villages, towns to boycott foreign products and indigenous peoples participated heavily in this matter. Government schools were trampled and shops were resisted. But that did not completely frighten the British colonizers. Besides the death sentence of revolutionary and freedom fighter

Khudiram Bose in 1908 on 11 August on the charges of bomb attack scared indigenous peoples. Though the revolution was not still stopped, but it had created panic and tension among common peoples. On the other hand British rulers were creating 'Divide and Rule policy' between Hindus and Muslims. In this span of time revoke Bengal division rebellion became the political and national rebellion of India. Finally in 1911, 29th July Mohun Bagan had won the IFA Shield tournament. All the Bengalis were united to celebrate the joy of Mohun Bagan because for them it was also the victory of Bengal as well as the victory of India. Bengalis wanted to insult, down, defeat the British rulers which they could through the triumph of Mohun Bagan Club. Peoples of different regions of India celebrated the success of Mohun Bagan Club as a part of national success. This joy was spreading among Hindus, Muslims, Christians and all the other religions. The win of Mohun Bagan Club tied the bonding of Hindu and Muslim strongly. This thing reminds me the poem of rebel poet Kaji Najrul Islam, 'Mora Eki Brinte Duti Kusum'. Here Nazrul Islam told that- "Mora eki brinte duti kusum Hindu-Musalman/ Muslim tar nayon-moni, Hindu Tahar Pran." ("We are the two flowers in a one stem Hindu-Muslim/ Muslim is his precious stone, Hindu is his breath.") (Islam, Lines 1-2). The XI legendary individuals of Mohun Bagan Club under the captainship of Shibdas Bhaduri were able to create unity among Bengalis. Indigenous people understood that their identity was Bengali and Indian. They understood the value of unity. The success and victory of Mohun Bagan club gave strength to the common peoples to protest and fight against British rulers jointly. In *Mohunbagan Eastbengal Reshareshi (Mohun Bagan East Bengal Battle)*, Manash Chakraborty put that "Football mather bijoy k Bangali British der biruddhe rajnoitik joy bole chinnito korlo. Prosno uthlo, khelar mathe to Union Jack neme galo, Writers Building theke kobe nambe?" ("Bengali addresses the victory on football ground against the British as political win. Question arises that Union Jack had been gotten off in football ground, but when will it be gotten off from Writers Building?") (Chakraborty 22). It means that common folk wanted to know eagerly from the legendary individuals of Mohun Bagan Club that yes, you did it in the battlefield of football ground by defeating those torturers but when we would get the absolute freedom from them? When India's national flag would be there on the top of Writers Building instead of Union Jack. After that not only Bengalis but all the indigenous peoples of India realized that independence was not far away, rather it was knocking their doors. The strength, unity, courage and the continuous increasing of protest feared the British settlers after that day. Finally in 12th December, 1911 within very few months of Mohun Bagan's victory, British rulers had transferred the capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi and revoked the decision of dividing Bengal. Within very short duration (1911-1947), more precisely within 45 years India got independence from British rule. Thus the victory of Mohun Bagan against British ruler paved the freedom struggle movement with golden lesson of 'unity' and stretched the path of hope for independence smoother. These were the historical facts of Indian freedom struggle movement which emphasized the film "Egaro" ("Eleven"). Though Arun Roy's film "Egaro" ("Eleven") did not highlight all the previous and after facts of Mohun Bagan's IFA Shield victory, but certainly it showed us that how Mohun Bagan Club encouraged common folks of India in nationalism and patriotism through the devotion and love of club, country, region on the one hand and championship of IFA Shield by non-violent insulting through soccer on the other hand. In other words, the film "Egaro" ("Eleven") showed us another aspect of nationalism and patriotism through soccer. The legendary individuals who evoked indigenous peoples to see the dream of independence and defeated the British colonizers in the IFA Shield tournament of 1911 were- "Hiralal Mukherjee; Bhuti Sukul, Sudhir Chatterjee, Manmohan Mukherjee, Rajen Sengupta, Nilmadhab Bhattacharya, Kanu Roy, Habul Sarkar, Abhilash Ghosh, Bijoydas Bhaduri, Shibdas Bhaduri (CAPTAIN)" ("Mohun Bagan "The Immortal" XI").

In the colonial discourse the dominant groups in a society imposed disciplines, values, rules and regulations upon dominated groups to maintain their superiority. In *A Beginner's Guide to Literary Theory*, Indrajit Sarkar has written that "colonial discourse is the complex of signs and practices that organize social existence and social reproduction within colonial relationships" (Sarkar 6). Colonizer always tortures the colonized to be remained as an authority and to enjoy the power. They always treats colonized as 'other' through repression, torture because they want to spoil the chance of challenges to be exceptionally fittest through survival. So they want to give colonized as inferior identity. In the film "Egaro" ("Eleven") British rulers did the same. By locating the colonized as other and inferior, colonizer tries to create his superior identity which is related with Bhabha's concept of 'Productive Ambivalence'. In this film we have seen that to prove the Indian people as other,

British rulers selected the policy of torture, hatred, anger as their weapons. According to Althusser's 'Repressive State Apparatuses' colonizers want to control the productions through repression and torture. They want to keep colonized as working-class forever who will only work for the betterment of bourgeois society. They practiced this matter through violence and physical repression. British rulers wanted exactly same from the common folks of Indian peoples. If anyone wanted to break this 'herd morality' they were punished tremendously. In the film "Egaro" ("Eleven") Mastermoshai (Guru) was a person who saw the dreams of removing slavery from the lives of indigenous Indian peoples. Apart from that he was a hardcore patriotic person and for that reason he gave shelter to a militant sometimes. British police got the information about that and as a result he was imprisoned. Police had beaten him mercilessly in the prison to get the information of that militant to whom he had been giving shelter. Even the British police did pee on Mastermoshai's (Guru) face. But he didn't disclose any single information about that militant. In spite of tolerating extreme torture he had been uttering "Bande matarm. Ba-n-de Ma-taram. Bande-ma-ta-ram" ("Mother, I bow to thee. Mo-ther, I bo-w to thee. Mo-th-er, I bow to thee") ("Egaro 00:23:35-00:23:53") till the last breath of her life. Even we came to know that Thakurmoshai's (Devotee) only son, Bhola became mad after being brutally tortured by the colonizers. He was a militant who devoted his life for the sake of motherland. In spite of being mad, he was suffering from 'obsessive compulsive disorder'. He furiously used to run toward the British persons whenever he had seen them. The white, British persons reminded him the non-indigenous peoples, colonizers, capitalists who had come to India to rule Indians and exploit India's natural resources.

There was some intimacy between Mastermoshai's (Guru's) only granddaughter, Bina and Abhilash Ghosh. The death of Mastermoshai (Guru) made her only granddaughter very alone. Her parents were not alive so her only guardian and resource was Mastermoshai (Guru). His death brought his only granddaughter in a completely lonely world. Before the final match of IFA Shield, Abhilash Ghosh was very upset. She could not tolerate the pain and grievance of her lover. In that sorrowful time he wanted to stay beside her lover. So he didn't want to play the final match of the IFA Shield tournament against East Yorkshire. Abhilash thought in this pathetic condition instead of giving condolence and reassurance to his lover Bina, it would be wastage of time to spend time in soccer. But the captain of Mohun Bagan, Shibdas Bhaduri tried to make him understand that this match was not a small match. The trust, dream, faith, desire of the native peoples were centered round the match. He further stated that it was the time of revenge against the colonizers who had killed Mastermoshai (Guru) and you should not be concentrated upon personal issues. Shibdas emphasized that Mohun Bagan were not playing for entertainment purpose but Mohun Bagan were playing for a greater purpose. The purpose was to challenge colonizer and to fight for the honor of nation. But Abhilash was strict in his decision and any vocal tonic of Shibdas, the captain was not able to change the decision of Abhilash. Being concentrated too much on the practice schedule of the final match he could not remain present from the very beginning in the funeral works of Mastermoshai (Guru) which was giving him shame. Even after the completion of funeral works when Abhilash went to meet Bina, she was not able to meet her that even increased the pain and sorrow of Abhilash more. Countering Abhilash's decision Shibdas told that "Shon Abhi; proyojone na dosh jone khelbo, khelar chhok paltabo kapurusher moto palabo na. Dersho bachor dhore Ingrej ra amader mariye chole jachche, tar ekta protibad jananor proyojon nai? Tui kede kede manush hobi na final ta khelbi sei bibechna tor. Ami chollam. Ekta katha jene rakhis Abhi podaghat r biruddhe podaghat ekmatro football ei sambhob. Eta amar katha na Vivekananda r" ("Listen Abhi; in necessity we will play with ten individuals or we will change the game plan but we will not definitely running away like a coward. British has been kicking us from one hundred fifty years, is there not any necessity to protest against them? The decision is yours' whether you will be man through lamentation or play the final. I am going. Remember Abhi the reply against kick can only be given by soccer. These words are not mine, rather Vivekananda's") ("Egaro 00:54:45-00:55:33"). Captain Shibdas didn't want to disdain and disrespect Abhilash as because he knew the importance of Abhilash in the team. He knew the mental condition of him very well. Even the death of Mastermoshai (Guru) saddened him. He wanted to give all answers in the ground, which will be battlefield to him. So he wanted to lighten the fire inside his soul. It is one kind of Shibdas's 'Strategic essentialism' to make everyone ready for the victory of the club as well as for the nation.

In the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”) the captain of Mohun Bagan Club, Shibdas Bhaduri thought only about championship. He knew it very well that if they would not defeat British brigades in the IFA Shield tournament they will not be able to prove the importance of Mohun Bagan Club in the field of nationalism, Indian peoples will not understand the value of Mohun Bagan Club, and the individuals of Mohun Bagan Club will not properly be able to show honor to the faith of Indians upon themselves. So his only focus was IFA shield championship. He understood that this was the right platform to challenge colonizers. Throughout the film we have seen that apart from championship he didn’t think about anything. For that reason he was remaining busy in making game plan, hard practice, giving tips to team mates, thinking about countrymen’s trust upon him. He even thought that if there would be rain at the time of match, it would be tough for them to control ball as they were barefooted. That’s why he scattered waters in his roof and told his team mates to practice on it. He even told his team mates to forget about pain and sorrow. Once a time of practice before championship he noticed that Kanu couldn’t lift his foot properly because of the severe pain in a foot. He then ordered and cheered up Kanu by saying “Byatha, jantrona sob moner. Final r age amra oder goal chara anno kichhu vabbo na. Ne chol” (“pain, trouble are depended upon mind. Before the final we didn’t think about anything. Let’s go”) (“Egaro 00:35:39-00:35:46”). So Shibdas is an internally driven person for the purpose of a greater issue. The purpose is to bring honor for Indians, give comfort to Indians, bring success for the institution, merge the name of Mohun Bagan Club with patriotism, and to see the joyful face of indigenous peoples who had great faith upon him as well as upon club. So I can describe Shibdas Bhaduri as an ‘Autotelic’ person. Indrajit Sarkar told that “Autotelic is used to describe people who are internally driven, and as such may exhibit a sense of purpose and curiosity. This determination is an exclusive difference from being externally driven, where things such as comfort, money, power, or fame are the motivating force” (Sarkar 5). Money was not at all his motivating force but things such as “power”, “comfort”, “fame” of Mohun Bagan Club and India were his motivating force. So the theory of ‘Autotelic’ can rightly be observed through Shibdas Bhaduri’s character in the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”).

At the very beginning of the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”), the individuals of Mohun Bagan were ‘doubly oppressed’. They were oppressed by the British colonizers and the mentality of some of the indigenous people. Some of them thought soccer is a just wastage of time and anything could not be achieved by it. Some thought it would be dangerous to fight against colonizers in the ground. On the other hand some rival clubs of Mohun Bagan Club became jealous for the sudden fame of Mohun Bagan Club. As a result they wanted the defeat of Mohun Bagan Club. Nagen was a leader of a revolutionary group. Though we didn’t find the name of group but that group believed in extremism to fight against British rulers. The members of the group devoted their lives for the sake of independence under the leadership of Nagen. One of the players worked in that group and his name was Rajen, who was also an important and essential player of Mohun Bagan Club. But according to Nagen militant and revolutionary person could not waste his time through soccer. That’s why he decreased the rank of Rajen in the group and didn’t want to give any important task to Rajen. His justification was that “Rajen, eta khela noy sangram” (Rajen, this is not game, this is revolution”) (“Egaro 00:23:18-00:23:24”). Mesomoshai (Uncle) was another person who didn’t recognize the value of Mohun Bagan’s IFA shield participation. He was suffering from ‘inferiority complex’ and for that reason he felt the participation of colonized side with colonizers would bring a big problem. So when the goal keeper of Mohun Bagan Club Hiru (short name of Hiralal) requested Mesomoshai (Uncle) to give him the job of bricklaying, he denied. He suggested him that if he would leave soccer he will give him the job. But Hiru requested him earnestly to allow him to play only the final match. But Mesomoshai (Uncle) was strict in his decision because he didn’t want to face any kind of nuisance from colonizers by giving him job. He told to Hiru that “Choddo purush dhore sahebder jutor tolay jonmecho, morecho. Ajke esescho tumi saheb k khela sekhate, Khelar mathe niyom sekhate? Amar chokher samne dariye theko na mathay kintu agun chhute jachche. Beriye ja! beriye ja! beriye ja ekhan theke” (“Colonized people have been getting birth and dying under Sahib’s foots for many years ago. Today you have come to teach soccer to Sahibs, the rule of ground? Don’t stay in front of my eyes because my head is burning. Go away! Go away! Go away in front of myself”) (“Egaro 00:32:42-00:32:54”). Though Rajen and Hiru both were insulted heavily, they didn’t want to ruin the dreams of Mohun Bagan Club. They gave importance to the voice of their consciences and took lesson from the insults. They were eager to make them understand the national importance of Mohun Bagan’s IFA shield victory. Even one of

the nationalistic news papers' chief authority, namely Krishna was not agreed to publish the news of Mohun Bagan after reaching to final of the IFA Shield tournament. When an employee of him asked him about that the chief authority opined that "Tomar sense of news dakhe voy pachchi. Desher manusher ki abostha, ingrejder ki aposahon esob fele rekhe ekta Mohunbagan captain r chobi chhapbe amader kagoj?" ("I am feared by your sense of news. Instead of focusing on the worst condition of countrymen, the maladministration of British shall our newspaper print an image of Mohun Bagan's captain?") ("Egaro 00:05:38-00:05:51"). But the employee confessed to his boss, Krishna that "IFA Shield final sudhu matro binodon eta ami mante parchi na Krishna da" ("I can't agree with you elder brother Krishna that the IFA Shield final is just entertainment") ("Egaro 00:05:53-00:5:58"). He wanted to mean that like the importance of other national issues, the final match of IFA Shield tournament had a national value and importance.

All those persons who didn't understand the importance of IFA Shield tournament recognized the value of it later. They understood that Mohun Bagan's attempt to challenge British colonizers through soccer was a part of revolution. Like other indigenous peoples of India, they had also recognized the ideology of Mohun Bagan Club under the captainship of Shibdas Bhaduri. Mesomoshai (Uncle) who scolded Hiralal previously for participating in the IFA Shield tournament because of the fear of British ruler, later began to believe that time had come to erase fear and if Mohun Bagan would defeat British ruler it would be a victory for Indian side. The victory of Mohun Bagan Club would lead India closer toward independence. So Mesomoshai (Uncle) understood that he should not be remain coward anymore and it was necessary for him to be present in the final match to support Mohun Bagan Club. As a result at the match day before going to field when his wife asked whether he will eat or not after coming back to home, he replied that "Ekhan maathe jachchi, kakhan firbo kichchu bolte parchi naa" ("Now I am going to ground and I can't tell you certainly when I would come") ("Egaro 1:10:49-1:10:54"). He wanted to mean that his first priority was to be the witnessed of Mohun Bagan's success and he was least bother about everything then. The revolutionary institution's leader Nagen who didn't behave properly at the very initial stage of the film "Egaro" ("Eleven") with Rajen for cankering time in soccer, later listened the praise of the individuals of Mohun Bagan Club from many indigenous peoples' mouth. He understood that people began to accept Mohun Bagan's try to insult British brigade in the soccer ground as a part of revolution. Then he also began to believe in a same way. That's why when Rajen lost his sense in the match after getting severe wound in the chest from an individual of British side, he came close to him and told motivational words to him-"Rajen otho, jago. Amra soinik. Amra jibon pon korechi desher jonno. Juddhokhetro chere palabo na. Aamoron lorai korbo. Bande mataram. Bande mataram. Bande mataram" ("Let arise and awake Rajen. We are soldier. We devoted our lives for the sake of motherland. We shall not get away from battlefield. We will fight till death. Mother, I bow to thee. Mother, I bow to thee. Mother, I bow to thee") ("Egaro 1:41:25-1:41:56"). Then all the supporters of Mohun Bagan chanted "Bande mataram" ("Mother, I praise to thee"). The motivational words of Nagen to Rajen were quite similar to the motivational words of Vivekananda for the indigenous peoples of colonized India-"Arise! Awake! And stop not until the goal is reached" ("Swami Vivekananda Quotes"). The motivation and support returned back Rajen's conscious. Then he began to play more powerfully. Nagen understood that the use of weapons and bombs were not only the path of revolution. The ground of soccer could be the battlefield and soccer could be another path of revolution. The nationalistic print media's boss, Krishna who didn't want to publish the news of Mohun Bagan club, published the details of IFA Shield final understanding the importance of it in national level. Mr. Amal was one of the prime officials of Mohun Bagan's rival club Shobhabazar. He could not tolerate the continuous fame and popularity of Mohun Bagan Club initially. Later he began to believe that Mohun Bagan was not only playing for its' own success but Mohun Bagan was playing for the prestige of colonized India also. So on the match day he worshiped toward goddess Kali for the success of Mohun Bagan. Thus Mohun Bagan got the support of all the Bengalis and other peoples of outside Bengal. So Mohun Bagan played as a representative of India. Mohun Bagan's proposition to give indigenous Indian peoples a chance to be the witnessed of the victory of the colonized and colonizer's insult in the soccer ground was related with 'Pragmatic Theory of Truth'. "A Pragmatic Theory of Truth holds (roughly) that a proposition is true if it is useful to believe. Peirce and James were its principal advocates. Utility is the essential mark of truth. Beliefs that lead to the best "payoff", that are the best justification of our actions, that promote success, are truths, according to the pragmatists" ("Truth"). The proposition of Mohun

Bagan to fight against Colonizers in the soccer ground to get victory as a representative of India was certainly true to believe. It was also justified and definitely it promoted success as a part of freedom struggle movement because it was able to make indigenous peoples brave and unified which feared the colonizers.

Colonizers wanted to maintain their superiority in every place. Even in the soccer ground they wanted to dominate colonized that we had seen in the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”). In a semi-final match against British side in the IFA Shield tournament, a player namely Pigat was unintentionally injured by Abhilash. The British rulers feared that if this injury gave moral support and courage to colonized group that would be dangerous. They didn’t want to give colonized any free space to challenge them. That’s why British police commissioner wanted the justification from the match referee of that particular match, Pular that why didn’t he gave punishment to Abhilash. But Pular as a responsible person answered the commissioner that being a referee in the ground he was neutral and he strictly monitored the rules, regulations and discipline and according to his observation the foul was totally unintentional. But the police commissioner ordered him that this type of accident should not be happened in future as well as reminded him that “And do not forget we are the rulers” (“Egaro 00:25:02-00:25:04”). In spite of having same rank and position, Sudhir Chatterjee was brutally abused by his British Colleagues. Sudhir was not only the important individual of Mohun Bagan but he was also the professor of N.M.S College. Though Sudhir repeatedly tried to make his British colleagues understand that the foul of Abhilash toward Pigat was unintentional, but they were not ready to believe it and as a result they disdained Sudhir by saying “bastard” frequently. At a certain point of time calm and gentle Sudhir had lost his control from himself and countered them by saying abusive words. For that reason he was suspended from the college for sine die. Here again we find the example of Bhabha’s concept of ‘Productive Ambivalence’. Locating the colonized as ‘other’, colonizer created his superior identity.

Sudhir was a very honest individual and in the squad only he played with boot. He always maintained generosity in match. While making the game plan for final there was some misunderstanding taken place between him and other individuals of Mohun Bagan Club. Other individuals wanted to play rough and tough game where he opposed that. While others reminded him that British had been doing merciless torture with indigenous peoples and in the ground they also continued their tremendous repression, Sudhir opined that the motto of Mohun Bagan in the ground is to “play the game in the spirit of the game” (“Egaro 00:15:20-00:15:22”). Even he confessed that it was important to enjoy the game and we should not mix soccer with politics. But others were not ready to accept the policy of Sudhir because they had taken the final match against East Yorkshire as a part of revolution and their rough and tough game will scare the colonizers what they believed. Sudhir didn’t accept the decision of others and as a result he refused to play the final match. But the captain Shibdas told him that “Ekta katha jene rekho Sudhir final amra jitboi. Se proyojone dosh jone khelbe. Jetbar jonno deshoprem r proyojon ache Sudhir” (“Remember one thing Sudhir we will definitely win the final match. In necessity we will play with ten individuals. Patriotism is required for winning, Sudhir”) (“Egaro 00:16:40-00:16:50”). But the day after misunderstanding Sudhir was brutally abused by his colleagues in the college. How it had happened that I have discussed in the previous section. Sudhir then understood it was necessary to challenge against British rulers and the final match was not limited within sportsman spirit. It was the time to do something for nation. So nationalism and patriotism were there in the final match. So he changed his decision and was ready to play the final match. Even Abhilash also changed his decision before final match. He understood that it was not the time for lamenting. But it was the time to challenge and fight against those ruthless British rulers who had killed his lover Bina’s only fulcrum, her grandfather who was called Mastermoshai (Guru) by everyone. Mastermoshai (Guru) had sacrificed his life for the sake of motherland, so it was necessary for him to do something for motherland. So he was also ready to play the final match. Before the final match Mohun Bagan was fully unified. Everybody had chosen the final match as a part of revolution.

“E khela sudhu khela noy, sudhu khela noy, sudhu khela noy- Sangram.

“(This game is not only game, not only game, not only game- Revolution.)

Aaj khela, e khela, e khela praner baji,

(Today's game, today's game, today's game is the betting of life,)

Sahid hoteo, hoteo, ajke amra raji.”

(Today we are ready to be martyr, to be martyr, to be martyr.)” (“Egaro 1:09:52-1:10:01”) lyrics of the song ‘Sangram’/’Revolution’ from the film “Egaro”/’Eleven”)

After defeating to St.Xavier’s, Rangers, Rifle Brigade, and Middlesex Regiment, Mohun Bagan had reached to the final of IFA Shield tournament. In final their opponent was East Yorkshire. Peoples from various parts of India had come to see Mohun Bagan’s victory. The individuals of Mohun Bagan were fully prepared to face the challenge of the colonizer. There was not any empty space in the ground and gallery. Every corners of the ground were filled with crowds. This match was not only the match of Mohun Bagan, rather it was the match of colonized India also. Mohun Bagan was representing India in the match. British colonizers invited Mohun Bagan in the IFA Shield tournament not to make them superior but to defeat them badly to prove colonized as inferior. Even the young pals of India had learned soccer from British that the narrator told at the very beginning of the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”). He also said that soccer was a strategy of the colonizer to divert the minds of the young generation from the nationalistic rebellion after the hanging of the freedom fighters Khudiram and Kanailal. So to invite the Mohun Bagan from colonized side in the IFA Shield tournament is related with Bhabha’s concept of ‘Mimicry’ which proclaims that colonizer wants sameness from other at the same time there are some differences. The final match between Mohun Bagan and East Yorkshire was started with full enthusiasm. But at the end of first half Mohun Bagan was losing with 1-0 goal which made everyone upset. But the secretary of Mohun Bagan, Sailen said motivational words for the individuals of Mohun Bagan Club-“Aaj amra ekhane khelte asini, lorte esechi. E lorai sudhu goal r jonnye noy desher jonnye, jatir jonnye, amader man, sanman,astittyer jonne. Matha uchu kore bachar ei ektai rasta khola ache. Mone rekho Sidhu, Kanu, Mongol Pandey, Khudiram eder karor che tomader dayitto kom noy. Ekbar vebe dakho to koto vaggyoban tomra!” (“Today we have come here not to play but to fight. This fight is not only for goal but for the country, nation, and also for our prestige, honor, existence. This is the only path to live with holding the head high. Remember that your duty is not less than Sidhu, Kanu, Mongol Pandey, Khudiram. Just think for a moment how lucky you are!” (“Egaro 1:35:07-1:35:41”) Sailen reminded them that it was the part of revolution and in this battlefield they were like the freedom fighters. These motivational words and the supports of the crowds increased the confidence of the individuals. As a result Mohun Bagan made the score line equal at the very beginning of the second half with the goal of the captain Shibdas. Finally before the final whistle of the match referee Mohun Bagan had scored their second goal. This time the scorer was Abhilash. Mohun Bagan had defeated East Yorkshire with 2-1 goals. The crowds of the ground burst out with joy. Mohun Bagan had converted the impossible to possible. The victory of Mohun Bagan had created a place in the ground for the colonized people “Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high” (Tagore, line 1). When referee gave the final whistle Nilmadhab pulled out benedictory flower of god which his mother had given him and then shouted “Maa jite gachi” (“Mother we have won”) (“Egaro 1:47:08-1:47:10”). His action reminded us the famous Sanskrit quote “Janani janmabhumscha svargadapi gariyasi” (qtd. Tendulkar 79) which means that mother and the motherland both are higher than heaven. After the match locating the Union Jack, Thakurmoshai (Devotee) asked the individuals when that will be descended from here. Sudhir replied that “Thakurmoshai chinta korben naa. Aaj k eta hoyeche. Khub taratari otao nambe” (“Don’t worry devotee. Today it has been done. Very shortly that will be descended”) (“Egaro 1:47:55-1:48:01”). At the very closing the narrator of the film said that “ei football i apamor janogon k jatiyotabad r shikore badhte perechilo. 1911 saler 12 December ingrej sarkar bangovango rod ghoshona korlo. Sei songe rajdhani soriye nie jete baddho holo sudur Delhi te. 36 bochor dhore abiroto sangramer por 1947 saler 15 August Union Jack k chiroto biday die Bharatbarso sadhin holo” (“this soccer was able to tie all the indigenous peoples with nationalism. British Government revoked the separation of Bengal in 12th December, 1911. As well as they were bound to shift the capital to foreseeable Delhi. After the continuous revolution of 36 years finally in 15th August,1947 India has become independent dismissing the Union Jack permanently”) (“Egaro 1:48:21-1:48:51”).

Conclusion

Mohun Bagan Club “is most notable for its victory over East Yorkshire Regiment in the 1911 IFA Shield final. This victory made Mohun Bagan the first all-Indian side to win a championship over a British side and was a major moment during India’s push for independence. Mohun Bagan celebrated their 100th anniversary in 1989. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi arrived for the celebrations on his speech referred to Mohun Bagan as National Club of India” (“Mohun Bagan A.C.”). The honor of the “National Club of India” was not given officially. But the way Mohun Bagan showed nationalism and patriotism in the IFA Shield tournament’s final against British colonizer that was understood by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi and so he gave Mohun Bagan this honorary title which I believe because this “win was considered a landmark victory in the Indian freedom struggle” (“Mohun Bagan A.C.”). In this context the lyrics of Babul Supriyo’s song ‘Sobuj Merun Sobuj Merun’ (‘Green & Maroon Green & Maroon’) was appropriate- “Sabuj Merun Sabuj Merun/ Paltola nouka chutche darun...../Ekti Club r I ache jatiyo Club r sanman/ Mohun Bagan Mohun Bagan” (“Green & Maroon Green & Maroon/ Sailboat is running nicely...../Only one Club has the honor of National Club/ Mohun Bagan Mohun Bagan” (“Sobuj merun 0:50-1:04”). Since July 29, 2001 till now every year on 29th July Mohun Bagan Club has been celebrating ‘Mohun Bagan Day’ for the club’s marvelous victory against British brigade in 1911 on 29th July. The individuals who had created history on that day were known as ‘Amor Ekadosh’ which translated to ‘Immortal xi’. It is not that if the individuals didn’t achieve victory on that day India will not give freedom from British ruling. But it is certainly right that this victory shook the British colonizer in fear and as a result later freedom struggle movement was growing more intensely. There were some differences between the real and reel which was also happened in the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”) according to the strategy of the director to make the matter more attractive. Here the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”) directed by Arun Roy gave us the light to see what was the intensity and importance of Mohun Bagan Club in the history of India’s nationalism and patriotism. We are able to recognize the individuals of 1911’s Mohun Bagan as the warriors and freedom fighters by the film “Egaro” (“Eleven”). We are also able to understand the justification of remembering these individuals as ‘Immortal xi’.

“Aamader khujle pabe sonay lekha itihase

“(We will be found in history if you would search)

Aamader rokte khela, khelar chhole biplobi desh

(Sport is in our blood, asserting revolution through sport)

Aamrai kakhono much, kakhono dol, kakhono desh.....”

(Sometimes we are face, sometimes team, sometimes country....)” (lyrics of the title song ‘Aamrai Mohun Bagan’/ ‘We are Mohun Bagan’ from the film “Egaro”/“Eleven”) (“Egaro 1:49:25-1:49:44”)

Foot-Notes- The translations from Bengali to English as quotations are completely done by me.

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