

Linguistic and Philosophical
Investigations ISSN: 1841-2394,
e-ISSN: 2471-0881
Vol 21, 2022
pp. 16-21

Bibhutibhushan's Concept of Nature in 'Aranyak'

Ghanshyam Roy

Assistant Professor

Dr. Meghnad Saha College

Ranipur, Itahar, District: Uttar Dinajpur

Email: ghanashyamroy24@gmail.com

Abstract:

Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay's 'Aranyak' is an outstanding creation in Bengali literature. The word 'Aranyak' means forestry where all the animals that grow and live in the forest. The oldest scriptures of India are the Vedas; the concluding part of each Veda is known as the *Brahman*. Again, the conclusion part of each *Brahman* is called *Aranyak*; The last part of the *Aranyak* is the *Upanishad*. The *Aranyak* records the teachings and teachings received from the Guru while living in the Aranya Ashram to receive celibacy. It is named *Aranyak* because of its origin in the forest ashram. In ancient India, along with the advanced human society, a culture was developed in the shadow of the forest, which is called *Aranyak* culture. As the successor of this *Aranyak* culture, Bibhutibhushan painted the picture of the calm nature of South Bengal in his novel 'Pather Panchali' and in 'Aparajita', he revealed the arrogant solemn beauty of the forest hills and painted a more detailed picture of the terrible solemn beauty of the horizon-wide nature on the other side of the *Kushi* river in the novel 'Aranyak'. In the novel 'Aranyak', we are to find out how Bibhutibhushan's love of nature, simple honesty has been expressed in the words of Satyacharan, a fascinated passive viewer of the forest-wilderness of Ajamabad, Narha-Boihar and Lobtulia range, in the background of the hills of Mohanpura Reserve Forest.

Keywords: Aranyak, Mohanpura Reserve Forest, Horizons-wide Nature, Narha Boihar, Forest-wilderness.

Received: 10 August 2022

Revised: 13 September 2022

Accepted: 15 October 2022

Main article:

Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay emerged in Bengali literature with a distinct perspective. In 1930, when the golden age of the job-dependent middle class in post-World War-I British colonial India came to an end, when the frequent movements of the freedom struggle and its turbulent waves disturbed the social and economic forces of the contemporary times, Bibhutibhushan appeared in the field of Bengali novels only with simplicity and worldview, love of nature and faith in God, respect for poor life and affection. Bibhutibhushan once came in contact with the nature and people of rural Bengal through his works and later he made this experience the subject of his stories and novels. But instead of expressing any political or economic statement, he made the search for God and love of nature as the subject of his writings. The dumb nature seems to have taken a living and eloquent image in Bibhutibhushan's writings and later he has made that experience artistic in his novel 'Aranyak' with the skill of the artist. 'Aranyak' is therefore a novel representative of Bibhutibhushan's life experience. This novel was published sequentially in '*Prabasi*' magazine from 1937 to 1939. Later it was published in a book form in 1939.

Novels are generally written in prose and the main theme of the novel is the people; but in terms of content, 'Aranyaka' is a novel set in the forest, but the life of the common people is not completely neglected there, rather it is intimately involved. Azamabad, Lobtulia, Ismailpur, Mohanpura Reserve Forest in Bhagalpur – this vast area is the backdrop of 'Aranyak'. Once Bibhutibhushan was the assistant manager of Khelat Chandra Ghosh Estate in Pathuriaghata and visited Bangladesh, Bhagalpur and other areas and became well acquainted with the nature. The beautiful beauty of nature in Bhagalpur, the beauty of the forest, made him excited and overwhelmed by the love of the forest. The forest environment and beauty of the arid regions of Bihar-Azmabad-Lohtulia Range have transformed him into a real nature lover. In 'Aranyak', Bibhutibhushan alias Satyacharan has the experience of living in this jungle palace. Satyacharan, the man of Calcutta, once entered this forest-land. Then he returned to Calcutta after arranging the distribution of this forest land. In the words of Satyacharan: "The beautiful forests of the Saraswati lake that were ruined by me in the forgotten past, their memories come like a dream and sometimes make the mind bored." ¹

The novel 'Aranyak' is an immortal creation of Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay; the design of this novel is also distinct from the ordinary novels. Here the Nature is primary and human beings are secondary. Man has to live here in harmony with nature, he has to depend exclusively on nature's generosity and resources. In a corner of nature, within a narrow range, one has to look at nature with open eyes. There is no fierce fury of

the human mind, the lust of desire, the pain of despair or the sky-high partisan of ego. Here the nature is the constant companion and relative of man which controls him from within.

The diversity and beauty of the limitless forest environment has exposed the imaginative vision of the author and in this context he has been extracting the nectar of life. In 'Aranyak', there is an atmosphere of a completely unknown mystery surrounded by a desolate forest spread over the horizon. This solitary mystery-solemn novel natural environment makes the whole atmosphere of the novel 'Aranyak' significant. The soil, the forest and the people here seem to have become unique. The nature of the *Seresta* employee Satyacharan alias writer Bibhutibhushan created an impeccable imagination by arousing various feelings and philosophical consciousness in the mind of the *Seresta* employee, its strangely beautiful description has been recorded in the pages of 'Aranyak'. So the writer remembers Kunta, Surtiya, Bhanumoti, Rakhal Babu's wife, Dhruva and Manchi. The author sighs and thinks: "How long do I keep no more of them?"²

Contemporary novelist Manik Bandyopadhyay wanted to show only the river in his novel 'Padma Nadir Majhi'. And in the novel 'Aranyak', Bibhutibhushan has also made the nature bigger than man. In the novel 'Pather Panchali', there are also people and nature; So 'Pather Panchali' is the story of nature and man. In the words of Bibhutibhushan: "Apu's childhood was spent in close contact with nature. When one season passes, the message of another falls – in the trees, in the sky, in the air, in the chirping of birds."³ Yes, in the novel 'Pather Panchali', there are these plants, the message of birds – but in the end, there is not only nature in this novel, but also people. And in the novel 'Aranyak' people are talked about, but nature has become bigger than the people. Bibhutibhushan is truly a nature-lover from his early childhood. Although he does not recognize all the flowers that bloom in the vast arena of forest nature, he looks at them with an inexplicable fascinated gaze. The people of the city bloom flowers in the garden or tub, the eyes of the urban people may not go to the flowers that bloom naturally in the forest-nature. But growing up in a rural environment, we notice the sincere expression of the connection of nature's pulse with Bibhutibhushan, in the pages of the novel 'Aranyak'. He wrote: "What a beautiful beauty of the forest towards the empty forest in one place! What a bunch of white flowers are blooming under the blue sky of the shadowy afternoon, illuminating the head of the whole forest. Far away from the limits of the civilized world behind the eyes of man, for whom is so much beauty arranged!

Wherever the eye goes, the heads of trees, the heads of bushes, the flowers of the slightly blue, white wild *Teuri* are blooming and shining – just as the zodiac sign has spread the blue cotton cotton everywhere on the top of the trees of the forest. It is so strange to look at one place that it seems to have a scattered mind – as if it seems how far away we are"⁴ Herein lies the deep nature of Bibhutibhushan Bandyopadhyay. Nature is an

essential part of life to him. His gaze is enchanting, but with two curious fascinated eyes, wherever he looks, the beauty of nature's fairy tale is exposed. He did not despise anything in nature, so everything in nature was recognized to him as precious and part of the whole. So Bibhutibhushan in 'Trinankur' says: "One of the characteristics of nature is that the form of nature in a secluded place brings new feelings and thoughts to the mind ... The proof of this is every evening on the way back from the field of *Kuthi*, standing at our *Ghat* in the evening, when I look at the first two or four stars in the sky on the other side, I realize, ..." ⁵

Bibhutibhushan described the natural environment of Lobtulia-Narha-Boihar Range in emotional language. In Satyacharan's statement, he wrote: "In so many forms that wild nature came before my fascinated eyes and forgot me! How many evenings have come in the crown of beautiful clouds of blood, the scorching afternoon sun has come in the guise of the mad *Bhoiravi*, in the deep night, the fragrance of the frosty forest in the form of *Sursundari*, the garland of stars in the sky, in the dark night, holding the sword of the fire of the black man, in the great image of *Kali* across the horizon." ⁶

The famous English writer Thomas Hardy wrote about Egdon Heath – this Egdon Heath has become as true to the readers as a living person. And Bibhutibhushan also described the natural beauty of Lobtulia-Narha-Boihar Range in emotional language. This nature has fascinated Bibhutibhushan alias Satyacharan at the same time; This nature has given him the joy of God, and sometimes this nature has appeared to Satyacharan with its horror. So Satyacharan felt like a very high level of silent music – in the faint light of the stars, in the absurdity of the light of the night, in the rhythm of the membrane, in the light of the fire-tail of the rushing meteor." ⁷

Satyacharan has seen the long *Bonjhau* and *Kashbon* of the huge Lobtulia-Narha-Boihar Range, this *Bonjhau* and *Kashbon* have created a sense of fear in the mind of Satyacharan. Satyacharan says "But what I have been trying to say again and again in various ways, but I have not been able to explain it correctly in any time, is the aspect of a mysterious infinity and invisibility of vastness and of terrible beauty." ⁸ In the nature of the forest, just as there is the calm-green beauty of infinite mysteriousness, so there is a ruthless-terrible form of nature that awakens wonder and fear. There is a very strange nature in the novel 'Aranyak'. In the summer, there is no escape if you lose your way inside this forest – sometimes there are fires here; sometimes the God of buffalo *Tarbaro* appears deep in the forest to save the helpless buffalo. So the nature of Bibhutibhushan not only fascinates people – this nature or natural environment also sometimes creates fear in the mind of people.

Again, another different form of nature has been revealed in the novel 'Aranyak'. Bibhutibhushan alias Satyacharan has witnessed a mysteriousness in this nature. He says: "Sitting alone on a horse in the silent

afternoon in the long forest of Bonjhau and Kashbon the horizon of the vast uninhabited Lobtulia-Boihar, this form of nature here has enveloped my whole mind with infinite mysterious feelings, sometimes it has come in the form of fear, sometimes in the form of a detached, bored, serious attitude, sometimes in the form of a sweet dream, in the form of pain of men and women in the country and abroad.”⁹ Where the bodiless *Jinporis* sometimes come down to the side of mountain springs in the night; sometimes they raise their hands for the welfare of the people and sometimes they show the way. As a result, the whole forest environment becomes mysterious and the reader’s mind gets a taste of a mystical mystery.

Another peculiarity of the nature of the novel ‘Aranyak’ is that this nature has created a spirituality in the mind of Bibhutibhushan alias Satyacharan; It has evoked the words of *Devlok*, such as “The light falls on the white-flowered vegetation tops of the vomer creeper, it seems that the white clothes of fairies are flying on the trees ”¹⁰

John Keats once said that poetry never dies. As we read about the nature of the novel ‘Aranyak’, we are reminded of Keats again and again. We get the description of the strange nature in the novel ‘Aranyak’. The nature of ‘Aranyak’ awakens the consciousness of God in the mind of Bibhutibhushan alias Satyacharan. Some of Satyacharan’s feelings: “The light has bloomed further, the stars are almost invisible in the light, looking around, this is not the world that I have known so far, this is the land of dreams, in this horizon of the light of the worldly creatures descend here late at night, they are objects of penance, imagination and dreams, those who do not love the flowers of the forest, do not know the beautiful, the horizon who have never called with their hands, the world never catches up to them.”¹¹

T.S. Eliot has painted the rough form of nature in his poem ‘The Waste Land’. Bibhutibhushan also witnessed the rough and harsh form of wild nature; but in it he also discovered the opposite. That is, unlike Eliot, he didn’t just want to highlight the disappointing side of life. He saw the dry wilderness of Lobtulia-Boihar; but at the same time, he saw the big trees grow up with sap from the dry-hard wilderness and they give shadow to people in need, obscuring *Maya*. Therefore, the nature of the novel ‘Aranyak’ is not the nature of Wordsworth, nor the nature of Thomas Hardy – the nature of ‘Aranyak’ is the nature of Bibhutibhushan or Satyacharan himself.

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