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MANIK & MARQUEZ: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN 'PADMA NADIR MAJHI' & 'ONE HUNDRED YEARS OF SOLITUDE'

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Abstract: 'Padma Nadir Majhi' is a masterpiece in Bangla Literature. It is rarely compared with other literary pieces of foreign languages. In this paper Manik Bandapaddhay's 'Padma Nadir Majhi' is compared with Colombian Writer Gabriel García Márquez's 'One Hundred years of Solitude (Cien Anos de Soledad)'. There are many similarities and dissimilarities between these two texts. Both belong to different settings, languages but still both give somewhat same kinds of theme, essence and messages to us. This study will unfold those unseen, untold points of views. Both Manik Bandapaddhay and Marquez did not know or meet each other but they showed us similar dream sitting totally opposite geographical location.

Key Words: Utopia, Arcadia, Isolation, Macondo, Moynadip, Incest, New World.

Introduction

Manik Bandapaddhay was born in May 19, 1908 in West Bengal. He experienced the obscurity of human nature and activities and the shrewd spitefulness of the individual person. He realized that it is not the society, which controls human beings, but it is man, who makes society and has concretized it according to own needs. Manik Bandapaddhay made a piercing analysis of human psychology, and his novels are vivid depiction of his outlook.

Gabriel García Márquez was born in 1928, in the small town of Aracataca, Colombia. When *One Hundred Years of Solitude* was published in his native Spanish in 1967, as *Cien años de soledad*, he achieved international fame. He received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1982. His novel is described by *The New York Times* as 'should be required reading for the entire human race.'

One Hundred Years of Solitude has received universal recognition. The novel has been awarded Italy's Chianciano Award, France's Prix de Meilleur Livre Etranger, Venezuela's Rómulo Gallegos Prize, and the Books Abroad/Neustadt International Prize for Literature. García Márquez also received an honorary LL.D. from Columbia University in New York City. The novel topped the list of books that have most shaped world literature over the last 25 years, according to a survey of international writers commissioned by the global literary journal *Wasafiri*.

Padma Nadir Majhi was first published in May 28, 1936 and in May 1948 English translation by Hirendranath Mukhopaddhay was published with the title *Boatman of the Padma*. It is among the best of the world literary heritage. On the other side *One Hundred years of Solitude* was published in May 1967 from Buenos Aires. Difference between publications is 33 years. Both the cover pages of *Padma Nadir Majhi* (first edition) and *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (first edition) have same pictures of boat. Both novels have river near locality.

Padma Nadir Majhi develops with the idealistic vision of Hosen Mia, a Bengali Muslim, to build a new settlement on the island of Padma Delta, Moynadip. In the political context of World War II, when the atmosphere was contaminated with the prejudice of Hindu-Muslim intolerance, Hosen Mia visions his Utopia, populated by people like him, irrespective of Hindus and Muslims.

Macondo is a newly founded village which is a collection of twenty huts made of bamboo and earth. When we will enter into the depth of both novels, we will find more similarities. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is as complex in quality and as wide in time span it comes. It's a seven generations' wide range story, sometimes characters and events are contradictory, it often deals with individual, often with collective people, mixture of 'heritage and modernism', 'imagination and reality', 'locality and worldwide', 'legendary and historical', 'everyday life and classical life' – all are mixed here. Whatever happens in human life's every aspect is represented here very artistically. It's an outstanding literary piece with the use of supernatural elements.

On the other hand, *Padma Nadir Majhi* is not so wide in respect to time and background as *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. There are not lots of incidents and crowd in *Padma Nadir Majhi*. But the mutual exchange of 'heritage and modernism', 'imagination and reality', 'locality and worldwide', 'legendary and historical', and 'individuality and collectivity' gives this novel an outstanding standard. In this novel, if 'Ketupur' is 'heritage', then 'Moynadip' will be its 'modern' version. If Ketupur's people are 'collective', then Hosen Mia is that 'individual' who wants to create a modern world with his dream. Again this individual is a combination of polyphonic tunes. If

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Ketupur is 'locality', then Hosen Mia wants to make his Moynadip an imaginary state with history and scientific knowledge.

One Hundred Years of Solitude can be read as the Bible, classics, history or simply as an epic. Because in this wide –ranged incidents, many Biblical or classical characters are found. Márquez shows it through his heavenly couple José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula. They have left their sinful world and are trying to make a second paradise in 'Macondo'. It means that Márquez is here telling us Adam and Eve's story. Again it can be a historical story of those European who left Europe to get a new world 'America'. Thus 'Macondo' can be a miniature of that new world. In the *Padma Nadir Majhi*, we see a parallel incident though it's not so direct and transparent. Kuber and Kapila take shelter in Moynadip to save them from doing sin in the heaven like 'Ketupur' or historically in 'Europe'. Like Márquez, Manik has also mixed history with classics. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is almost obsessively circular in its outlook, as characters repeat, time and again, the experience of earlier generations. The book's fatalism is underscored by this circular sense of time. Even a name is given to a person at birth predetermines his or her life and manner of death.

Incest: A recurring theme in *One Hundred Years of Solitude* is the Buendía family's propensity toward incest. The patriarch of the family, Jose Arcadio Buendía, is the first of numerous Buendías to intermarry when he marries his first cousin, Úrsula. It is worth noting that this initial, incestuous act can be viewed as an "original sin". We can make a comparison of José Arcadio Buendía and Úrsula with Kuber and Kapila. José and Úrsula are from same family tree but they got married. As a result throughout the novel the family is haunted by the fear of punishment in the form of the birth of a monstrous child with a pig's tail. That's why for a long time they avoided physical intercourse but it happened one day suddenly. Though they knew that it might give birth of such child but also it would keep alive this new world. Almost the same situation we found in Moynadip where Hosen Mia allows physical relation between young Enayet and the young wife of an old man because Hosen Mia needs more human beings to fulfill his island. If Enayet can give birth of child, that is more important for Hosen Mia than incest. At this point both writers are in the same stand point crossing all the bars of time, culture, language and geographical distance.

Padma Nadir Majhi is essentially a psycho anatomy deals with the life and activities of the fishermen community surrounding the river Padma. It is mainly concerned about the nature of human mind and the intricacies and meanness, which have entwined the human beings in the post war era. The political context, on which the socio-religious ethos of the novel is set, vividly portrays the tensions and complicacies of the individuals, who are suffering from identity crisis.

Solitude

There is a great similarity between Moynadip and Macondo- that is its solitude. Perhaps it is the most dominant theme in the novels. Macondo was founded in the remote jungles of the Colombian rainforest. The solitude of the town is representative of the colonial period in Latin American history, where outposts and colonies were, for all intents and purposes, not interconnected. Isolated from the rest of the world, the Buendías grow to be increasingly solitary and selfish. With every member of the family living only for him or herself, the Buendías become representative of the aristocratic, land-owning elite who came to dominate Latin America in keeping with the sense of Latin American history symbolized in the novel. This egocentricity is embodied, especially, in the characters of Aureliano, who lives in a private world of his own, and Remedios, who destroys the lives of four men enamored by her beauty. Throughout the novel it seems as if no character can find true love or escape the destructiveness of their egocentricity.

Both Moynadip and Macondo are very isolated and cut from the outside world. Both of them keep communication with history or outside world with Hosen Mia and Melquíades. Hosen Mia is creating a completely new world with his own knowledge alone. José Arcadio is also ambitious like Hosen Mia. He collects scientific tools from Melquíades and uses them to enrich his backward family with modern scientific knowledge. At the beginning of the novel, we see how José Arcadio is busy to use Portuguese map, naval equipments, Astrolabe, compass, and sextant which he got from Melquíades and he spends months after months to learn measuring time, how to find path in sea, astrology etc. Likewise, Hosen Mia is also a great captain who knows well how to sail his boat without knowing any written direction. This José Arcadio seems the distant replica of Hosen Mia. Sometimes Hosen Mia seems the summation of José Arcadio and Melquíades. Hosen Mia is the collective and compound representation of man's historical experiences. If we compare Ketupur as 'Europe' then Moynadip is 'America'.

In *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, the male figures are obsessive, and full of ambitious projects and passionate sexuality. They are, however, given to extreme anger, irrational violence and long periods of self-imposed solitude. The female characters also lend themselves to categorization. With the exception of the Remedios, the women in the book exhibit either common sense and determination or passionate eroticism. But while the men are dreamy and irrational, the women are firmly rooted in reality. Both sexes, however, embody a similar fatal flaw; they lack the ability to relate to the world outside of Macondo. They fall victim to their own constructions, plunging them into a harsh and long-lasting solitude.

We find in *Padma Nadir Majhi*, Hosen Mia helps all the poor people and lives a simple life with them though he has well contact with society's high profile

people. Same way, Melquiades helps José Arcadio by giving various things. When Macondo's people were suffering from insomnia, he gave them liquid injections. Macondo's people's fate was dependent on Melquiades and also Ketupur's poor people's fate is dependent on Hosen Mia.

Characters

Though there are lots of characters in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, but not a single character is as versatile as Hosen Mia. He is a combination of multi-personalities. His knowledge, humanity, creativity is unparalleled. His clear conception about political knowledge, perfect technical knowledge etc are found in various characters in scattered ways. Colonel Aureliano Buendía is the most consistent character in *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. But he also does not possess the quality of Hosen Mia as his control over emotion, target, and firm determination.

In the *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, imagination and reality intermingle which is not so prominent in the *Padma Nadir Majhi*. This mixture of imagination and reality we will find in Hosen Mia.

Religion and Love

It's true that *Padma Nadir Majhi* cannot reach the artistic level of *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. But Manik tried to compensate that height by adding two important elements – one is 'religion' and other is the main element of imaginary world 'love'. In Latin America, religion and religious sentimentalism is not so strong or important factor but in Indian sub continent, religion is always very sensitive issue. Still we see that Marquez mocks with religion in the *One Hundred Years of Solitude*. In the main entry of Macondo a sign board written "God exists" is kept for surviving them from forgetfulness. Manik Bandopaddhay took us in his imaginary world where he made religion a minor concern with his artistic logic. We find two authors' different attitudes for religion because of their cultural differences.

Before Manik Bandopaddhay, BankimChandra tried to make an ideal imaginary world but he failed in 'Sitaram'. Manik successfully completed Bankim's unfinished work in *Padma Nadir Majhi*. Manik tried to make Moynadip a successful imaginary world and for that he gave strong foundation of love. Love of Kuber and Kapila made his plan successful.

Manik did not have favourable environment like Marquez to invent new and complex literary devices for novel. 'Don Kihote' was the first Spanish novel which was published in 1605. It means Spanish –American novel's heritage was already four hundred years old when Marquez was writing. Whereas in Manik's time he found only hundred years of heritage of Bengali novels in his back. He found only Bankim and Rabindranath Tagore's example for Bengali novels. Even they are mentioned because that time novels were only started to be written in Bengali. They were not involved in any new experiment with

novels as were Serbantes, Karpentier, Boherse or Masedonio. As a result Marquez found a fertile and ready field for novels which Manik did not get. He sows seeds of his own genius alone almost in a barren land. Considering the narrow heritage we can say that Manik's contribution and credits are quite respectable.

But Marquez got the examples of Peres Galdos, Birey Inclan, Romuno Gaiyegos, Home Maria Argedas, Huan Runfo, Aleho Kapentier, Huan Karlos Onetti etc. All of them carry lots of references of artistic, versatile backgrounds for Marquez which made him interested and encouraged to create a huge depth in his writings.

Conclusion

Garcia Marquez is more than a Nobel Prize winning author. He is a magician par excellence; someone whose unique ability to produce a magical realm where anything is possible and everything is believable is unrivaled. This is the overwhelming reason why this dazzling masterpiece does, and will continue to attract, convince and hypnotize readers for decades to come. Garcia Marquez in his Nobel speech mentioned an imaginary world where nobody will determine other's death, where love will be the ultimate truth and happiness will prevail always. Those nationalities will get second chances in this world forever that are punished with solitudes. Manik Bandapaddhay foreshadowed the same imaginary world of Marquez in his novel *Padma Nadir Majhi* which was not found in Marquez's novel. Manik fulfilled Marquez's desire in different name many years ago in his 'Moynadip' which Marquez expected in reality. Great novelist Manik Bandapaddhay presented us this second chance of imaginary world through the love of Kuber and Kapila. The Guardian described *One Hundred Years of Solitude* as 'enormously, kaleidoscopically, mysteriously alive'. Throughout the novel, Garcia Márquez is said to have a gift for blending the everyday with the miraculous, the historical with the fabulous, and psychological realism with surreal flights of fancy. It is a revolutionary novel that provides a looking glass into the thoughts and beliefs of its author, who chose to give a literary voice to Latin America: "A Latin America which neither wants, nor has any reason, to be a pawn without a will of its own; nor is it merely wishful thinking that its quest for independence and originality should become a Western aspiration. *One Hundred Years of Solitude* works on so many levels, from childlike fantasy to exploration of the grief or happiness that solitude can bring, that it can be re-read without any reduction in enjoyment - in fact, each reading brings a wealth of forgotten or previously unnoticed details to the reader, wrapped in a lightness of style that gives this novel a charisma that assures its appeal.

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