



SAGAR IN THE NOVEL “AAMAR JA ACHHE”: INNER CONFLICT OF THE WRITER PRACHET GUPTA.

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To create character and to express the author's inner desire through that character are common facts of literature in all languages all over the world. If displayed directly, there remains a possibility to become victim of influentials, so through the medium of literature the creator signals to various anomalies of society. Among all branches of literature, prose writing is mainly pursued in this 21st century. In recent Bengali literature, one of the most prolific prose writers is Prachet Gupta. His writings attract readers' attention soon after publication. Innovative theme and different styles of presentation attract readers always. Minute observation power, absolute analysis and satire are the ornaments of his writings. He has been regularly writing for 'Desh', 'Anandabazar', 'Sananda', 'Bartaman' etc.

Prachet Gupta has created an attractive character – Sagar. 'Aamar Ja Achhe', 'Chand Pore Achhe' – all these novels centres round Sagar. Besides, collection of stories, 'Sagar Hoite Sabdhan' is written about Sagar. Many regard him as heir to Himu or Nillohit.

Our focus Sagar has been taken from the novel 'Aamar Ja Achhe'. The first novel of Prachet Gupta, 'Amar Ja Achhe', was published in 2008. (1) The very first novel brought him honour. He got Sutapa Roychowdhury Memorial Award given by Paschimbanga Bangla Academy. The hero here is benevolent to all. This young bohemian does not bother about power or money. The first novel about Sagar, 'Aamar Ja Achhe' begins like this –

‘There's no loss in inviting useless person like you. Will the birthday be celebrated in empty house?’ (2)
Then this useless person becomes 'Sagarbabu', –

‘Ah! What a relief you gave –
Let me sleep a bit Sagarbabu’. (3)

The novel ends like this, –

“Hey you, wake up. You have to go into lock-up. A man like Daroga has come before me. ‘Watch, ring–whatever you have, hand over now. Nothing can be taken into lock-up. What do you have with you?’

Bowing my head down, I whispered, ‘Nothing, I have nothing.’” (4).

Such a 'sweet ending' is not expected by the readers. The writer transforms the hero Sagar from a common man to a special one. Why did you send this most special person to prison? Was there any doubt in the novelist's mind? If not, why did he cut down a tree from root, brought up so far with so much care?

Before discussing the character of Sagar, a comment has been mentioned from conscious writer Prachet Gupta,-
‘In fact, our society is going through many events, in which there is large space for satire’. (5)

So, he has taken his pen to describe the anomalies – social, political, economical. He has shot his arrow of satire through his created character – Sagar. However, nowhere he takes medium of violence. With his very cool and steady brain, he has fulfilled his aim through Sagar.

In this ultra-modern era happy conjugal life is losing stability. Divorce has taken a shape of polio silently. It has made our society lame. Sagar has attacked the fierce form of divorce in funny style. When Shymalda's wife delivers the duty to call a lawyer for divorce, Sagar laughingly says, -

‘House is crowded. Dishes are ready. It's perfect time. According to me, a divorce must witness same pomp and pleasure seen during marriage. Same atmosphere will be there as marriage ceremony. Everybody will be well-dressed. We made a blast of fun. Ate even the curd with full hand.’ (6)



A question may arise that Sagar is unmarried, so the pain of divorce will be impossible for him to bear with. How can he satirize it? Though Sagar is unmarried, the author is not. So, reader easily realizes who the real commentator is.

Economic inequality cannot float away from Sagar's observation. Someone is becoming richer and richer just nurturing Tagore's creation. Another class is growing poorer. Book binder presents Tagore's creations very well before readers. Readers are teacher, professor, singer, producer, actor etc. They are growing richer. Yet, the book-binder only manages to procure load of sufferings even after so much physical labour. Poverty is his daily companion. Sagar observes the sufferings of such a book-binder, Jagannath. He presents his thoughts before intellectuals, all eligible for research works, – 'Suffering of Kobiguru's book and the book-binder.' (7)

It has been a tradition to flatter the influential persons. It becomes more lavish if that person is any political man or a minister. Sagar cannot accept this flattery at all. Minister's power is negligible to him. He troubles minister at his own house. Minister becomes uneasy.

Communalism has made us its prey. Criminalism in the name of religion is happening daily. It matters little quarrelling with neighbours. In this unrestful condition, Sagar's presence is surprising. He does not hesitate while eating meat cut by Rahim Chachu. He feels no problem eating rice prepared by Kmala Bhabi. He does not hesitate in freeing David Chacha from jail. Though he himself a Hindu, he never expresses dishonor to other religions or people from other religions.

The communion of science and technology is the weapon of country. If that becomes a boomerang to nation, the outcome will be fatal. Mobile phone is a rich harvest of science and technology. But researches reflect that overuse of it is terrible. Even then people are callous. Sagar satirizes at the misuse of mobile, -

'Even a few days ago there was a rule to go away from a person doubting him mad if he was seen talking to himself in bus-tram-road. After the arrival of mobile that rule seems to fade away. If any insane whispers himself, nobody goes away from him thinking he is talking over mobile.' (8)

Sagar with his sharp eye has observed personal, family, social, political, economical, technological anomalies. With minute consideration he has analyzed everything. We don't feel any trouble to prove his philosophical outlook.

Now let's taste the story of Sagar's transformation from common to special personality. Before that, an excerpt from narrator's interview, -

'Always try not to bow down. I am lucky not to get too many disagreeing people while working. Where I work, I try to maintain all rules and regulations... I work taking those factors and by chance money does not attract me.' (9)

In the novel 'Aamar Ja Achhe' there is a collection of all types of professionals – minister, police, doctor, businessman, company worker, book-binder, rickshaw-puller, prostitute. But jobless Sagar is in the middle of all attraction. Be loved Reba say insultingly, -

'Don't shout saying no job is there.
All know you have no job.' (10).

He does not care being insulted. No repent for being jobless. No money in pocket. No permanent address. So, surity for ends' meets. To sum-up, inhabitant of nothing. Yet he is really satisfied. His belief, – 'Everyone lacking money do evils.' (11).

Money is the source of all evil. For this, he does not mix with evils. Liberal life is his aim. So, he has handed over the job he deserved to the son of the owner.

Besides, this jobless fellow protects other's job. To save Tamal's job, to prevent honest police officer's job, to help book-binder's family with money – there are so many. In author's words, - 'He is a problem solver.' (12).



To satirize all anomalies and to solve other's problem – these are acceptable. As the author says Sagar in acting as per requirement of the character. But the problem arises when he is sent to jail suddenly.

Yes, 'suddenly'. At the final stage of the novel he takes Shyamalda's 'icy beautiful' sister-in-law with deep attraction for car riding. Within a little time he fumbles! Mita informs crying, - 'Get down, get down please. Requesting at your feet. You get down.' (13)

Where has she made him get down? In front of zoo. Sagar wanted to come here. He has tremendous curiosity to see tiger. He gets a beating from police and gets a place in jail at last. We are to accept this!

Let's take the matter in a different way. Who is this Sagar?

There is first person narrative at the beginning and end of the novel. Secondly, there is similarity between the attitudes of Sagar and its creator. Both are not addicted to money. After all, to explain the reason behind choosing the name, 'Sagar' the author informs, -

'Another reason is that the meaning of my name is also sea. May be that has also worked'. (14)

It is easily understandable that through Sagar, the author himself has attacked firmly against the anomalies of society. But last of all, he has been unable to stick to his own point. That is easily felt through his own comments, -

'For the last eighteen-nineteen years, I am writing seriously. Thought of spending life with this writings. I wished to earn every single rupee from here. For this, I also chose journalism.' (15).

As he is a journalist and married, responsibility of work-place and family maintenance were assigned to Prachet Gupta, for this an understanding has come upon him, - 'I must abide by the rules of my work place – that is included into the policy of the institution.' (16).

Needless to say, Prachet Gupta indirectly makes an understanding with the excuse of policy. He has bowed down before power. Even after turning the idle, bohemian youth Sagar into an altruist, sympathetic, sensible, accomplished, he has made him imprisoned. One who has overthrown a leader, at last answers 'whispering'. Where has that revolutionary shining gone from his voice? He has been mixed in crowd of society for some unknown reasons – among the flock of creatures without protesting. Will there be a professional problem? Fear of having the same state of Kalburgi.

If seen indifferent way, for the sea churning, sea made the gods immortal with his 'breast-wealth' - immortal liquid. In return, Sagar gets the poison. The name of the hero in 'Aamar Ja Achhe' is Sagar, is that the reason for his suffering pain in jail even after liberating society from taints. May be!

This uncalled for truth has been established through ages. The value of simple life is missing. Protesting face is disappearing. In this 21st century of 'Hok Kalarab' Prachet Gupta has taken up modern tradition. He makes himself 'safe' from these eyes.

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