



**SOCIAL VALUES IN MAMONI ROISOM GOSWAMI'S NOVEL**

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**ABSTRACT**

Dr. Indira Goswami popularly known as Mamoni Roisom Goswami is without doubts one of the finest novelist, storyteller in Assamese literature. A renowned scholar in Ramayani Sahityam Mamoni Roisom Goswami was a keen observer of social happenings. From social justices, feminism to revolt against animal sacrifice in the name of DHARMA or finding a solution to the insurgency problem in Assam, everywhere she was closely involved.

In Most of her novels, evils in the name of tradition or social values are reflected and criticized mercilessly. The three novels taken for discussion here namely Nilakanthi Braja (1976), Mamore Dhara Taruwal (1980) and Dantaal Haatir Uye Khowa Haonda (1988) are very good examples of her fighting against social evils. Some noticeable similarities in these novels are, in all the three novels we come across some characters who had faced some bitter experienced in their lives. Their lives became miserable due to vague social beliefs, rigid traditional norms or so called social values. Mamoni baidew reflected the miseries of these down trodden characters in very wonderful way.

In the novels for our discussion, Nilakanthi Braja (1976), Mamore Dhara Taruwal (1980) and Dantaal Haatir Uye Khowa Haonda (1988), how religious believes, tradition, social values, rigid social laws, superstition etc. can turn life of a person into hell trying to depict as much as possible. We see the characters of the novel revolting against these believes, sometimes directly and sometimes symbolically or indirectly.

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**INTRODUCTION**

The traditional, cultural\_ social justices or social believes etc. in a society are considered as social values. These help a smooth running of a society in one hand, but in many times these social values become unbearable for many people. In short, social values directly linked with human values, because human values look into wellbeing of every human being, and a standard life style. Many times we see social values make trouble in some body's life but without any assumption or prior indication. Sometime we see protest against these social values.

In some of the prominent writes in Assamese language, we find protest against some social values which hamper human values. Mamoni Roisom Goswami (1942-2011) is one of the leaders of this group. A true humanist and renowned writer Mamoni Roisom Goswami started her career as writer in sixties of last century by writing short stories. Later she became famous as novelist by writing some extra ordinary novels in Assamese literature. From short stories, Novels, biography, autobiography, translation works from various languages, research work, edited works are the various fields explored by Mamoni Roisom Goswami.

Her great works include apart from her three novels taken for discussion, Senabor Sot (1972), Ahiran (1990), Jakhami Yatri (1980), Dasarathir Khoj (1998), Apsara Griha (2007), Tej Aaru Dhulire Dhusarita Pristha (1994), Sapor Saalor Jota (1986), Udai Bhanur Charitra (1986), Budha Sagar Dhusar Gaisa Aaru Mohammad Moosa (1980), Bhikshar Patra Bhangi (1994), Theng Phakhri Tohsildarr Tamor Tarowal (2009) etc .

A recipient of prestigious Sahitya Academy, Jnyanpeeth Award and some other prominent recognition very lately she was conferred ASSAM RATNA. In almost every creation of her literary works, Goswami reflected the miseries of human life.

In the novels for our discussion, Nilakanthi Braja (1976), Mamore Dhara Tarowal (1980) and Dantaal Haatir Uye Khowa Haonda (1988), how religious believes, tradition, social values, rigid social laws, superstition etc. can turn life of a person into hell trying to depict nicely. We see the characters of the novels revolting against these believes; sometime directly and sometime symbolically or indirectly.

Actually like other novels of Mamoni Roisom Goswami the plots of Nilakanthi Braja (1976), Mamore Dhara Tarowal (1980) And Dantaal Haatir Uye Khowa Haonda (1988) are also realistic; based on day to day life. Once she herself wrote that she takes plots for her novels from real life. Her personal

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experience can be felt in her novels. She wrote her novels based on rude reality. Conflict between social values and human values is the main cause that her novels are based on rude reality.

***Social values in Nilakanthi Braja, Mamore Dhara Tarawal and Dantal Haatir Uye Khowa Haonda:***

***Nilakanthi braja:*** The short novel by Mamoni Roisom Goswami namely NILAKANTHI BRAJA was written with on her own experience of life. Some of the characters of the novel faced lot of miseries only because of rigid traditional beliefs and social values or we can say superstitions. As a result of these circumstances we see some type of revolt within the changing behavior of the characters.

In the novel we see the dark side of Hindu tradition and miserable lifestyle of the widows. The main character of the novel is Soudamini. In the beginning of the novel we see Soudamini lost her husband and because of which her parents were very sad. They thought of living their old age with happiness but some such incidents happened that their lives became miserable. Their only daughter became widow.

It seems Soudamini's widowhood is more miserable for them than the incident that Soudamini lost her husband. The hidden threat is that of rigid tradition of Hindu society. For a Hindu woman, particularly a Brahmin woman, when she became widow; her life became very very miserable. Her life became dull instead of being lively. This is the most threatening traditional believe of the Hindu society. That is why the Rai Choudhury family felt very sad while they came to know that their only daughter became widow. They know very well how cruel and rigid is the tradition of Hindu society in the case of a Brahmin widow. After Soudamini became widow, they wish that their daughter should live a life of a Brahmin widow with rigid restrictions and social value. On the other hand Soudamini was against all these thoughts. She is a lady who believes prosperity and wants to live a lively life. In course of time she faded away all the memories of her husband and she allowed a Young man to enter in her life. She even thought of marrying the young man. In the society where remarriage of a widow is next to impossible, in the same society there is rigid caste system. Where only Hindu boy can marry a Hindu girl; moreover there is caste division in the Hindu society. Forgetting all these, Soudamini loves a Christian youth. It is easily imaginable how her parents will react on this fact. They tried to change Soudamini's mind. That is why they took Soudamini to BRAJA. Soudamini was very obedient to her parents. Though she almost forgot her husband's memory and still she feels for the Christian youth, obeying her parents, she went to live in BRAJA.

But she could feel the inhuman atmosphere and rigid ethgics in BRAJA. There she could not feel peace of mind. Though BRAJA is a respectable place for the Hindus, though many people went there for living their last days; still one could feel the inhumanity there. People mostly the widows had to live on begging. There are so many BHAJAN ASHRAMAS in BRAJA. Where in most of the places instead of religion people are more interested in other luxuries. The RADHESWAMY women knew all these, still instead of living and worshipping god with empty stomach they were bound to compromise with situation. That is why though they were busy in singing BHAJANAS their eyes were on their vegetable stalls.

It was almost difficult to live and end her life in BRAJA, for Soudamini; who left her lover and came to stay in BRAJA with her parents. She eagerly wants to meet her lover. She expressed her dissatisfaction in front of her mother several times. There are instances where we can see that though Raichoudhury family is very god fearing and follower of Hindu tradition, still it seems they least bothered on caste system. Only because of this mentality, her father left her with the Christian lover, without informing his (Soudamini mother) wife. Thus we can see a complete contrast of social values in the novel NILAKANTHI BRAJA.

***Dantal Haatir Uye Khowa Haonda:*** Published in Assamese literary magazine PRAKASH, the novel DANTAL HAATIR UYE KHOWA HAONDA is also a revolt against social values. The novel is based on an incident occurred in South Kamrup. We see how religious institution like the DAMODARIYA SATRA of South Kamrup made lives of the people miserable in this widely read novel. We see the untouchability system in this novel. The SATRADHIKAR family members don't even touch anybody from lower caste of the society. Durga had to take her bath again because she touched the shadow of Christian officer Mr. Mark. The ladies of the SATRADGHIKAR's family could never go to the street alone. Most of them had to die living within the campus of their house.

In a society of such rigid traditions if a girl gets her puberty inside a house the house i.e. the family itself becomes untouchable. As a result of which the sister of Indranath Giribala was married to GOHAIN's son of BONGORA; who was a characterless fellow. Giribala was not at all worried when her characterless husband died. Instead she had immense hatred toward her husband. Still she had to live a life of widow, by offering regular puja to her husband and taking only vegetable food. But she was a woman of courage. She could revolt against all these evil system. She ended her life by sacrificing her life and setting herself in fire and letting the goat out of the house which was burning.

***Mamore Dhara Tarawal:*** The novel is also based on reality. The novel describes the situation and condition of the lifestyle of the labourers involved in bridge construction over river Sai in Raebareli. The novel describes mainly the miseries of the labours; but still there is a description of of pathetic caste system in the society. The novelist herself mentioned that she herself went to the construction site and stayed there for picking up the plot of the novel.

We see in the beginning of the novel the rude behavior of upper caste people to the HORIJON (Shceduled Caste) people. We see how the local leader Sharti's assistant behaved newly elected leader of labour union Yoshowant. Even Basumati was offered water by the upper caste family asking her to stay outside of their boundary. Later we see Basumati was very much upset on this behavior of so called upper class people.

## CONCLUSION

Thus in the all three novels of Mamoni Roisom Goswami we see how social values, superstition, rigidity make one's life into hell. It seems these traditional believes turns a man toward negativity of life rather prosperity. We see the reaction to the rigidity of traditional and social values in the entire three novel; of course in various ways. In all these novels we can

feel the soft corner of the novelist towards the down trodden people of the society.

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