



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

Sarat Chandra as undiminished Sun of Bengali language, literature and culture

Sourin Chakraborty, Under graduate student (Bankura University)

Dr. Ramen Goswami, English Department, Magadh University

Abstract: Sarat Chandra is a well-known Bengali novelist and short story writer from the early twentieth century. He was a superb storyteller who developed many unique and lovely characters, including 1) Srikanta (Novel Srikanta), 2) Sabyasachi (Novel Pather Dabi), and 3) Devdas (Novel Devdas) 4) Lalu ; 5) Ramesh (Palli Samaj). Sarat Chandra was born into poverty in the Indian town of Debanandapur, in the state of Hooghly. Sarat Chandra's family was sporadically supported by other family members, and his lack of financial stability would have an impact on his writing in the future. He began his studies at "Pyari Pandit's" pathshala before enrolling at Hooghly Branch High School. Chattopadhyay began his education as a fine arts student, but he dropped out due to his ongoing poverty. He acquired his early education at Bhagalpur, where he lived with his maternal uncle. He spent 20 years of his life in Bhagalpur, and a large number of his works were either set in or inspired by his experiences there.

Keywords: love, nature, women, genre, young

Character of Srikanta:

Srikanta, the narrator, is an aimless wanderer, a passive observer who can't survive without the help of someone more powerful than himself. He idolises the chaste Annada Didi as a youngster, seeing her as the image of sacrificial love to an useless husband... He travels to Burma as a young man in search of new experiences, where he meets the rebellious Abhaya—who rejects her violent, bigamous husband in order to live openly with her lover—and learns to question the hypocritical social norms that bind a woman but let a man off—and learns to question the hypocritical social norms that bind a woman but let a man off. He tries to become a sanyasi, is entranced for a time by the Vaishnavi, Kamal Lata, and wanders aimlessly until he finds a focus—when he resigns himself to life with the notorious but attractive Pyari Baiji, breaking away from his directionless existence. Saratchandra brings nineteenth-century Bengal to life through his vibrant and engaging characters, a prejudice-ridden society in desperate need of fundamental transformation. In modern Indian literature, Srikanta established the foundation for socially concerned writing. Srikanta's entire life journey was a reflection of his underlying philosophy of life.

Character of Sabyasachi:

Following its serialisation in the Bengali monthly Bangabani, Sabyasachi Pather Dabi sparked a huge uproar. The story of Sabyasachi, the charismatic head of the military organisation Pather Dabi, and the powerful female characters that surrounded him – their inter-relationships, agony, and ecstasy – piqued the public's interest.

Character of Devdas:

Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's novel Devdas is a Bengali Romance novel. It is essentially a retelling of the Krishna, Radha, and Meera tales, with the relationships between the three characters – Devdas, Parvati, and Chandramukhi – mirroring those of the Hindu gods. In the early 1900s, Devdas is a young man from an affluent Bengali Brahmin family in India. Paro (Parvati) is a young Bengali woman from the “merchant” caste who comes from a middle-class Bengali household. Devdas and Paro were childhood friends and lived in the same hamlet in Bengal.

Devdas is sent to a boarding school in Calcutta for thirteen years to learn and live (now Kolkata). When he returns to his village after finishing school, Paro anticipates their childhood love blossoming into a future journey together in marriage. Of course, Paro's parents would have to approach Devdas' parents and propose Paro's marriage to Devdas, as Paro desired, in accordance with social custom. When Paro's mother proposes to Devdas' mother, she taunts her, stating flatly that the marriage is impossible due to her own better rank and financial standing. Paro's mother then finds an even wealthier partner for Paro to demonstrate her own social rank.

When Paro learns of her impending marriage, she meets Devdas late at night in the hopes that he will immediately accept her hand in marriage. Devdas begs his parents' permission to marry Paro, but his father consents to his wife's wishes. Devdas goes to Calcutta in a weakened position, where he writes a letter to Paro, claiming that they were simply friends. He soon learns, though, that he should have been more daring. He returns to his hometown and tells Paro that he is willing to go to any length to maintain their relationship. Paro's marriage plans have progressed to the point that she declines to return to Devdas and chastises him for his timidity and vacillation.

Devdas returns to Calcutta, and Paro is promised to a widower with children who is still in love with his previous wife and hence has no interest in an amorous connection with Paro. Chunnilal, Devdas' carousing buddy in Calcutta, introduces him to Chandramukhi, a courtesan. At Chandramukhi's, Devdas begins to drink heavily, but the courtesan falls in love with him and looks after him. His health deteriorates as a result of a mix of binge drinking and existential despair—a protracted sort of suicide. He regularly compares Paro and Chandramukhi in his mind, but he is undecided about who he truly loves.

Devdas returns to see Paro to fulfil his commitment, sensing his impending death. On a dark, frigid night, he dies at her doorstep. When Paro learns of Devdas' death, she rushes to the door, but her family members prevent her from opening it.

Character of Lalu:

Srikanta, Sarat Chandra's most famous protagonist, was based on his recollection. Similarly, he has a slew of autobiographical characters peppered throughout his work; in other words, they owe their existence partly to real life and partially to the author's memory. 'Lalu' was the title of three stories he authored. Two of them are recounted here. There are two males with the same name in these two stories. They could potentially be the same person, captured at different times in their lives, except a few clues that indicate otherwise. Regardless, the stories are funny tales about mischievous lads, as they often are. These two short films elicit loud guffaws, laughter, and occasionally snickers.

Character of Ramesh:

The novel follows Ramesh, a young Roorkee-trained engineer, as he attempts to bring change to the caste-ridden village and raise the residents to a higher level of existence. It goes into great detail on the village's corruption and Ramesh's efforts to eradicate it.

Sarat as nature lover:

Sarat Chandra, a traveller and nature lover, travelled to Burma (now Myanmar) in 1893 and found work as a clerk in a government office. In Rangoon, he married his first wife, Shanti. His wife and one-year-old kid, however, perished of plague, leaving the writer devastated. Later, he married Mokshada, also known as

Hironmoyee, whom he taught to read and write. Sarat Chandra wrote his first short story in 1903 under the name Surendranath Ganguli, which was his uncle's name. In 1907, he released the novella 'Baradidi' under his own name.

Sarat as nationalist:

Many of his writings focused on the spirit of nationalism, and they grabbed the hearts and minds of innumerable Indian readers. 'Pather Dabi,' his political fiction, was instrumental in bringing the people together. He was an important participant in India's liberation struggle, serving as president of the Indian National Congress's Howrah district branch from 1921 until 1936. Palli Samaj (1916), Choritrohin (1917), Devdas (1917), Nishkriti (1917), Srikanta, Griha Daha (1920), Sesh Prasna (1929), and Seshar Parichay (1930) are among his most popular novels (published posthumously in 1939). At the same time, his significant essays include Narir Mulya, Swadesh O Sahitya, and Taruner Bidroho. His novels have been translated and adapted the most, with roughly 50 films based on his stories. Devdas is one of the latter, with 16 different variants.

Relationship with Rabindranath:

Sarat Chandra met Rabindranath Tagore for the first time during his stay in Howrah. They met at the Jorasanko Thakur Bari musical festival 'Bichitra,' where novelist Charu Bandopadhyay introduced them, and Rabindranath asked him to read his story 'Bilashi.' They had an excellent relationship and had visited one other's homes on multiple occasions. Sarat Chandra left the city about a decade later and began practising homoeopathy in the village of Samtaber. His major task now was to deliver free care and medicine to the underprivileged villages. Needless to say, like a native snake charmer, he was skilled at catching snakes from holes, as seen by his famous composition 'Bilashi,' which tells the story of a snake charmer's daughter.

Sarat and Bangla culture:

Since the colonial period, no single author or wordsmith has been able to carve out such a detailed analysis of Indian society and paint it in such vivid, colourful depictions with such vivacious words. Sarat Chandra is the uncrowned king of tragedy, with most of his works focusing on current social evils and injustices, with a focus on the plight of women. He wrote under the pen name Anila Devi, which is interesting. His famous literary masterpieces include "Bor Didi," "Biraj Bou," "Ramer Sumati," and "Bindur Chele." "Pather Dabi," on the other hand, is a magnificent masterpiece centred on the theme of military struggle to liberate our nation from colonial tyranny in his time. The British government was so taken with this book that they decided to publish it.

Sarat Chandra practised Homeopathy, created a primary school, and founded a Keertan music celebration during his lifetime. His first wife, Shanti Devi, died of plague in 1908, along with their one-year-old son. He studied sociology, politics, philosophy, health sciences, psychology, and history at the Barnerd Free Library to fill the hole in his life. Due to health issues relating to cardiac troubles, he had to reduce his study hours in 1909 and began painting. Ravan-Mandodori was the title of his debut artwork. In 1910, Chatterjee married for the second time, to Mokshada, an adolescent widow whom he called Hiranmoyee.

Sarat in his young age:

Sarat was gifted in areas other than writing. Not only could he sing and act, but he could also play the flute and tabla. He was also a talented athlete. During these formative years, his performance in feminine characters in dramatisations of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's books, Mrinalini, Bilvamangal, and Jona, may have allowed him to be more thoroughly affected by Bankim's writings. The Kunri Sahityik – Budding Literateurs – group, which included people who frequented the Bhatta's, published their first hand-written journal, Chhaya, in April 1901, which included Sarat's Aalo O Chhaya, and later Chhaya published a few additional stories mentioned above.

Sarat as social crusader:

Chattopadhyay's writings questioned religious and caste orthodoxy at the time. Because of the powerful female characters he created in his writings, he was also labelled a feminist. Swami, the key character in Saudamini, for example, was a clever young girl who studied literature and wasn't scared to speak up to her mother-in-law in his work. Choritroheen, his story, is also about four strong women. In total, his books have been adapted into more than 50 films in Indian languages. Devdas, in particular, has been adapted into 16 languages, ranging from Bengali to Hindi to Telugu. Parineeta was made twice as well. His novel Pather Dabi was adapted into the 1977 film Sabyasachi. Nishkriti was one of the other films based on his books.

Rural India as his settings:

Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay is regarded as an author who best comprehended Bengal villages. His paintings have a rustic feel to them, as they depict normal day-to-day life stories of families that live far away from cities in the peace and quiet of nature, growing old among rivers, forests, and farmland. He spoke warmly of women and spoke openly and honestly about their plight in a patriarchal environment. He expressed his displeasure with the societal prejudices, injustices, and superstitions perpetrated in the name of religion.

Contributions and awards:

His first work, 'Badadidi' (1907), became an instant hit with readers. 'Bindur chhele' (1913), 'Parinita' (1914), 'Baikunther will' (1916), 'Devdas' (1917), 'Srikanta' (Part I-IV, 1917-1933), and 'Charitrahin' (1917) are some of his other well-known books. The British authorities, however, banned his work 'Pather Dabi' (1926) because of its revolutionary tone. He wrote a series of children's stories and novels, including the well-known 'Ramer Shumati' and the short stories about 'Lalu and his pals.' Many successful films based on his stories have been made and are still being made, like 'Devdas,' 'Parinita,' 'Srikanta,' and so on. For his contributions to Bengali literature, he got various prizes. 'Kuntalin puraskar' (1903), 'Jagattarini Svarna Padak' (1923), 'Bangiya Sangeet Parishad' membership (1934), and an honorary D.litt from Dhaka University in 1936.

Conclusion:

Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay articulated his feelings towards women in two of his important essays, 'Narir Mulya' and 'Swaraj Sadhonay Nari.' He couldn't totally overcome the societal restrictions on women in a feudatory state ruled by foreigners, but by defining female characters, he fueled their innate yearning to escape the slough of despair. Sarat Chandra highlighted the phoney values and false standards of a society that established separate norms of conduct for men and women, as well as a culture that praised women's sacrifice and chastity. His sensitivity is reflected in his sympathy for young widows and prostitutes. The Western style of feminism had little influence on Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay.

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